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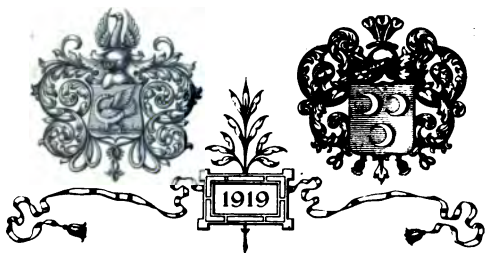
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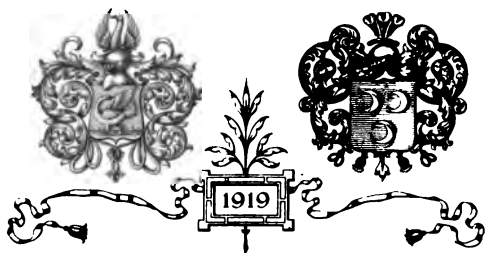
under the terms of the last will and testament of

CATHERINE GANSEVOORT LANSING

*granddaughter of
General Peter Gansevoort, junior
and widow of the
Honorable Abraham Lansing
of Albany, New York*

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February
1920



PAUL CLIFFORD.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "PELHAM," "THE DISOWNED,"
AND "DEVEREUX."

Bulwer-Lytton, Edward George Earle Lytton

Many of your Lordships must recollect what used to take place on the high roads in the neighbourhood of this metropolis some years ago. Scarcely a carriage could pass without being robbed, and frequently the passengers were obliged to fight with, and give battle to, the highwaymen who infested the roads.—*Duke of Wellington's Speech on the Metropolis Police Bill, June 5th. Mirror of Parliament, 1830, page 2050.*

Can any man doubt whether it is better to be a great statesman, or a common thief?—*Jonathan Wild.*

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PAUL CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER I.

Come, the plot thickens! and another fold
Of the warm cloak of mystery wraps us around.

* * * * *

And for their loves?

Behold the seal is on them!

Banner of Tyburn.

WE must not suppose that Clifford's manner and tone were towards Lucy Brandon such as they seemed to others. Love refines every roughness; and that truth which nurtures tenderness, is never barren of grace. Whatever the habits and comrades of Clifford's life, he had at heart many good and generous qualities. They were not often perceptible, it is true, first, because he was of a gay and reckless turn; secondly, because he was not easily effected by any external circumstance; and thirdly, because he had the policy to affect among his comrades only such qualities as were likely to give him influence with them. Still, however, his better genius broke out whenever an opportunity presented itself. Though no "Corsair," romantic and unreal, an Ossianic shadow becoming more vast in proportion as it recedes from substance; though no grandly-imagined lie to the fair proportions of Human Nature, but an erring man in a very prosaic and homely world; Clifford still mingled a certain generosity and chivalric *emprize*, even with the practices of his profession. Although the name of Lovett, by which he was chiefly known, was one peculiarly distinguished in the annals of the adventurous, it had never been coupled with the rumours of cruelty or outrage, and it was often associated with anecdotes of courage, courtesy, good-humour, or forbearance. He was one whom a real love was peculiarly calculated to soften and to redeem. The boldness, the candour, the

unselfishness of his temper, were components of nature upon which affection invariably takes a strong and deep hold. Besides, Clifford was of an eager and aspiring turn; and the same temper and abilities which had in a very few years raised him in influence and popularity far above all the chivalric band with whom he was connected, when once inflamed and elevated by a higher passion, were likely to arouse his ambition from the level of his present pursuits, and reform him, ere too late, into a useful, nay, even an honourable member of society. We trust that the reader has already perceived that, despite his early circumstances, his manner and address were not such as to unfit him for a lady's love. The comparative refinement of his exterior is easy of explanation, for he possessed a natural and inborn gentility, a quick turn for observation, a ready sense both of the ridiculous and the graceful; and these are materials which are soon and lightly wrought from coarseness into polish. He had been thrown, too, among the leaders and heroes of his band; many not absolutely low in birth, nor debased in habit. He had associated with the Barringtons of the day: gentlemen who were admired at Ranelagh, and made speeches worthy of Cicero, when they were summoned to trial. He had played his part in public places; and, as Tomlinson was wont to say after his Ciceronian fashion, "the triumphs accomplished in the field, had been planned in the ball-room." In short, he was one of those accomplished and elegant highwaymen of whom we yet read wonders, and by whom it would have been delightful to have been robbed: and the aptness of intellect, which grew into wit with his friends, softened into sentiment with his mistress. There is something, too, in beauty (and Clifford's person, as we have before said, was possessed of even uncommon attractions) which lifts a beggar into nobility; and there was a distinction in his gait and look which supplied the air of rank, and the tone of courts. Men, indeed, skilled like Mauleverer in the subtleties of manner, might perhaps have easily detected in him the want of that indescribable essence possessed only by persons reared in good society; but that want being shared by so many persons of indisputable birth and fortune, conveyed no particular reproach. To Lucy, indeed, brought up in seclusion, and seeing at Warlock none calculated to refine her taste in the fashion of an air or phrase to a very fas-

tidious standard of perfection, this want was perfectly imperceptible: she remarked in her lover only a figure every where unequalled—an eye always eloquent with admiration—a step from which grace could never be divorced—a voice that spoke in a silver key, and uttered flatteries delicate in thought and poetical in word:—even a certain originality of mind, remark, and character, occasionally approaching to the *bizarre*, yet sometimes also to the elevated, possessed a charm for the imagination of a young and not unenthusiastic female, and contrasted favourably, rather than the reverse, with the dull insipidity of those she ordinarily saw. Nor are we sure that the mystery thrown about him, irksome as it was to her, and discreditable as it appeared to others, was altogether ineffectual in increasing her love for the adventurer; and thus Fate, which transmutes in her magic crucible all opposing metals into that one which she is desirous to produce, swelled the wealth of an ill-placed and ominous passion, by the very circumstances which should have counteracted and destroyed it.

We are willing, by what we have said, not to defend Clifford, but to redeem Lucy in the opinion of our readers, for loving so unwisely; and when they remember her youth, her education, her privation of a mother, of all female friendship, even of the vigilant and unrelaxing care of some protector of the opposite sex, we do not think that what was so natural will be considered by any inexcusable.

Mauleverer woke the morning after the ball in better health than usual, and consequently more in love than ever. According to his resolution the night before, he sat down to write a long letter to William Brandon; it was amusing and witty as usual; but the wily nobleman succeeded, under the cover of wit, in conveying to Brandon's mind a serious apprehension lest his cherished matrimonial project should altogether fail. The account of Lucy and of Captain Clifford contained in the epistle, instilled, indeed, a double portion of sourness into the professionally acrid mind of the lawyer; and as it so happened that he read the letter just before attending the Court upon a case in which he was Counsel to the Crown, the witnesses on the opposite side of the question felt the full effects of the barrister's ill-humour.

The case was one in which the defendant had been engaged in swindling transactions to a very large amount

—and, amid his agents and assistants, was a person ranking among the very lowest orders—but who, seemingly enjoying large connexions, and possessing natural acuteness and address, appeared to have been of great use in receiving and disposing of such goods as were fraudulently obtained. As a witness against the latter person appeared a pawnbroker, who produced certain articles that had been pledged to him at different times by this humble agent. Now, Brandon, in examining the guilty go-between, became the more terribly severe, in proportion as the man evinced that semblance of unconscious stolidity, which the lower orders so ingeniously assume, and which is so peculiarly adapted to enrage and to baffle the gentlemen of the bar. At length, Brandon, entirely subduing and quelling the stubborn hypocrisy of the culprit, the man turned towards him a look between wrath and beseechingness, muttering—

“Aha!—*if* so be, Counsellor Brandon, you knew vat I knows, you would not go for to bully *I* so!”

“And pray, my good fellow, what is it that you *know* that should make me treat you as if I thought you an honest man?”

The witness had now relapsed into sullenness, and only answered by a sort of grunt. Brandon, who knew well how to sting a witness into communicativeness, continued his questioning, till the witness, re-aroused into anger, and, it may be, into indiscretion, said, in a low voice—

“Hax Mr. Swoppem (the pawnbroker) what I sold 'im on the 15th hof February, exactly twenty-three year'n ago?”

Brandon started back, his lips grew white, he clenched his hands with a convulsive spasm; and while all his features seemed distorted with an earnest, yet fearful intensity of expectation, he poured forth a volley of questions, so incoherent, and so irrelevant, that he was immediately called to order by his learned brother on the opposite side. Nothing farther could be extracted from the witness. The pawnbroker was re-summoned; he appeared somewhat disconcerted by an appeal to his memory so far back as twenty-three years, but after taking some time to consider, during which the agitation of the usually cold and possessed Brandon was remarkable to all the court, he declared that he recollected no transaction whatsoever with the witness at that time. In vain were

all Brandon's efforts to procure a more elucidatory answer. The pawnbroker was impenetrable, and the lawyer was compelled reluctantly to dismiss him. The moment the witness left the box, Brandon sunk into a gloomy abstraction—he seemed quite to forget the business and the duties of the court; and so negligently did he continue to conclude the case, so purposeless was the rest of his examination and cross-examination, that the cause was entirely marred, and a verdict "Not Guilty" returned by the jury.

The moment he left the court, Brandon repaired to the pawnbroker's; and after a conversation with Mr. Swoppem, in which he satisfied that honest tradesman that his object was rather to reward than intimidate, Swoppem confessed that twenty-three years ago the witness had met him at a public house in Devereux-court, in company with two other men, and sold him several articles in plate, ornaments, &c. The great bulk of these articles had, of course, long left the pawnbroker's abode, but he still thought a stray trinket or two—not of sufficient worth to be re-set or re-modelled—nor of sufficient fashion to find a ready sale, lingered in his drawers. Eagerly and with trembling hands did Brandon toss over the motley contents of the mahogany reservoirs which the pawnbroker now submitted to his scrutiny.—Nothing on earth is so melancholy a prospect as a pawnbroker's drawer!—those little, quaint, valueless ornaments, those true-lovers' knots, those oval locketts, those battered rings, girdled by initials, or some brief inscription of regard or grief—what tales of past affections, hopes, and sorrows do they not tell! But no sentiment of so general a sort ever saddened the hard mind of William Brandon, and now less than at any time could such reflections have occurred to him. Impatiently he threw on the table, one after another, the baubles once hoarded, perchance, with the tenderest respect, till at length his eyes sparkled, and with a nervous gripe he seized upon an old ring, which was inscribed with letters, and circled a heart containing hair. The inscription was simply, "W. B. to Julia." Strange and dark was the expression that settled on Brandon's face as he regarded this seemingly worthless trinket. After a moment's gaze, he uttered an inarticulate exclamation, and thrusting it into his pocket, renewed his search. He found one or two trifles of a similar nature; one was an ill-done miniature

set in silver, and bearing at the back sundry half-effaced letters, which Brandon construed at once (though no other eye could) into "Sir John de Brandon, 1635, Ætat. 28;" the other was a seal stamped with the noble crest of the house of Brandon, 'A bull's head ducally crowned and armed Or.' As soon as Brandon had possessed himself of these treasures, and arrived at the conviction that the place held no more, he assured the conscientious Swoppem of his regard for that person's safety, rewarded him munificently, and went his way to Bow-street for a warrant against the witness who had commended him to the pawnbroker. On his road thither, a new resolution occurred to him, "Why make all public," he muttered to himself, "if it can be avoided? and it may be avoided!" He paused a moment,—then retraced his way to the pawnbroker's, and after a brief mandate to Mr. Swoppem, returned home. In the course of the same evening, the witness we refer to was brought to the lawyer's house by Mr. Swoppem, and there held a long and private conversation with Brandon: the result of this seemed a compact to their mutual satisfaction, for the man went away safe, with a heavy purse and a light heart, although sundry shades and misgivings did certainly ever and anon cross the latter; while Brandon flung himself back in his seat, with the triumphant air of one who has accomplished some great measure, and his dark face betrayed in every feature a joyousness and hope, which were unfrequent guests, it must be owned, either to his countenance or his heart.

So good a man of business, however, was William Brandon, that he allowed not the event of that day to defer beyond the night his attention to his designs for the aggrandizement of his niece and house. By day-break the next morning, he had written to Lord Mauleverer, to his brother, and to Lucy. To the last, his letter, couched in all the anxiety of fondness, and the caution of affectionate experience, was well calculated to occasion that mingled shame and soreness which the wary lawyer rightly judged would be the most effectual enemy to an incipient passion. "I have accidentally heard," he wrote, "from a friend of mine, just arrived from Bath, of the glaring attentions paid to you by a Captain Clifford; I will not, my dearest niece, wound you by repeating what also I heard of your manner in receiving them. I know the ill-nature and the envy of the world, and I do

not for a moment imagine, that my Lucy, of whom I am so justly proud, would countenance, from a petty coquetry, the advances of one whom she could never marry, or evince to any suitor partiality unknown to her relations, and certainly placed in a quarter which could never receive their approbation. I do not credit the reports of the idle, my dear niece, but if I discredit, you must not slight them. I call upon your prudence, your delicacy, your discretion, your sense of right, at once, and effectually, to put a stop to all impertinent rumours: dance with this young man no more; do not let him be of your party in any place of amusement, public or private; avoid even seeing him, if you are able, and throw in your manner towards him that decided coldness which the world cannot mistake!" Much more did the skilful uncle write, but all to the same purpose; and for the furtherance of the same design. His letter to his brother was no less artful. He told him at once that Lucy's preference of the suit of a handsome fortune-hunter was the public talk, and besought him to lose not a moment in quelling the rumour. "You may do so easily," he wrote, "by avoiding the young man; and should he be very importunate, return at once to Warlock—your daughter's welfare must be dearer to you than any thing."

To Mauleverer, Brandon replied by a letter which turned first on public matters, and then slid carelessly into the subject of the Earl's information.

Among the admonitions which he ventured to give Mauleverer, he dwelt, not without reason, on the want of tact displayed by the Earl, in not manifesting that pomp and show which his station in life enabled him to do. "Remember," he urged, "you are not among your equals, by whom unnecessary parade begins to be considered an ostentatious vulgarity. The surest method of dazzling our inferiors is by splendour—not taste. All young persons, all women in particular, are caught by show, and enamoured of magnificence. Assume a greater state, and you will be more talked of; and notoriety wins a woman's heart more than beauty or youth. You have, forgive me, played the boy too long; a certain dignity becomes your manhood: women will not respect you if you suffer yourself to become 'stale and cheap to vulgar company.' You are like a man who has fifty advantages and uses only one of them to gain his point,

when you rely on your conversation and your manner, and throw away the resources of your wealth and your station. Any private gentleman may be amiable and witty; but any private gentleman cannot call to his aid the Aladdin's lamp possessed in England by a wealthy Peer. Look to this, my dear Lord. Lucy at heart is vain, or she is not a woman. Dazzle her then—dazzle! Love may be blind, but it must be made so by excess of light. You have a country house within a few miles of Bath—why not take up your abode there instead of in a paltry lodging in the town? Give sumptuous entertainments—make it necessary for all the world to attend them—exclude, of course, this Captain Clifford—you will then meet Lucy without a rival. At present, excepting only your title, you fight on a level ground with this adventurer, instead of an eminence from which you could in an instant sweep him away. Nay,—he is stronger than you; he has the opportunities afforded by a partnership in balls where you cannot appear to advantage; he is, you say, in the first bloom of youth—he is handsome. Reflect!—your destiny, so far as Lucy is concerned, is in your hands. I turn to other subjects, &c."

As Brandon re-read ere he signed this last letter, a bitter smile sat on his harsh, yet handsome features. "If," said he, mentally, "I can effect this object; if Mauleverer does marry this girl, why so much the better that she has another, a fairer, and a more welcome lover. By the great principle of scorn within me, which has enabled me to sneer at what weaker minds adore, and make a footstool of that worldly honour which fools set up as a throne, it would be to me more sweet than fame—ay, or even than power—to see this fine-spun Lord a gibe in the mouths of men—a cuckold—a cuckold!" and as he said the last word, Brandon laughed outright. "And he thinks, too," added he, "that he is sure of my fortune; otherwise, perhaps, he, the silversmith's descendant, would not dignify our house with his proposals; but he may err there—he may err there;"—and finishing his soliloquy, Brandon finished also his letter by—"Adieu, my dear Lord, your most affectionate friend!"

It is not difficult to conjecture the effect produced upon Lucy by Brandon's letter: it made her wretched; she refused for days to go out; she shut herself up in her

apartment, and consumed the time in tears and struggles with her own heart. Sometimes, what she conceived to be her duty conquered, and she resolved to forswear her lover : but the night undid the labour of the day ; for at night, every night, the sound of her lover's voice, accompanied by music, melted away her resolution, and made her once more all tenderness and trust. The words, too, sung under her window, were especially suited to affect her ; they breathed a melancholy which touched her the more from its harmony with her own thoughts. One while they complained of absence ; at another they hinted at neglect ; but there was always in them a tone of humiliation, not reproach : they bespoke a sense of unworthiness in the lover, and confessed that even the love was a crime ; and in proportion as they owned the want of desert, did Lucy more firmly cling to the belief that her lover was deserving.

The old Squire was greatly disconcerted by his brother's letter. Though impressed with the idea of self-consequence, and the love of tolerably pure blood, common to most country squires, he was by no means ambitious for his daughter. On the contrary, the same feeling which at Warlock had made him choose his companions among the inferior gentry, made him averse to the thought of a son-in-law from the Peerage. Despite of Mauleverer's good-nature, the very ease of the Earl annoyed him, and he never felt at home in his society. To Clifford he had a great liking, and having convinced himself that there was nothing to suspect in the young gentleman, he saw no earthly reason why so agreeable a companion should not be an agreeable son-in-law. "If he be poor," thought the Squire, "though he does not seem so, Lucy is rich!" And this truism appeared to him to answer every objection. Nevertheless, William Brandon possessed a remarkable influence over the weaker mind of his brother ; and the Squire, though with great reluctance, resolved to adopt his advice. He shut his doors against Clifford, and when he met him in the streets, instead of greeting him with his wonted cordiality, he passed him with a hasty "Good-day, Captain!" which after the first day or two merged into a distant bow. Whenever very good-hearted people are rude, and unjustly so, the rudeness is in the extreme. The Squire felt it so irksome to be less familiar than heretofore with Clifford, that his only remaining desire

was now to drop him altogether; and to this consummation of acquaintance the gradually-cooling salute appeared rapidly approaching. Meanwhile, Clifford, unable to see Lucy, shunned by her father, and obtaining in answer to all inquiry rude looks from the footman, whom nothing but the most resolute command over his muscles prevented him from knocking down, began to feel, perhaps, for the first time in his life, that an equivocal character is at least no equivocal misfortune. To add to his distress, "the earnings of his previous industry"—we use the expression cherished by the wise Tomlinson—waxed gradually less and less, beneath the expenses of Bath; and the murmuring voices of his two comrades began already to reproach their chief for his inglorious idleness, and to hint at the necessity of a speedy exertion.

CHAPTER IV.

Whackum.—Look you there, now! Well, all Europe cannot show a knot of finer wits and braver gentlemen.

Dingley.—Faith, they are pretty smart men.

SHADWELL'S SCOURGERS.

THE world of Bath was of a sudden delighted by the intelligence that Lord Mauleverer had gone to Beauville (the beautiful seat possessed by that nobleman in the neighbourhood of Bath), with the intention of there holding a series of sumptuous entertainments.

The first persons to whom the gay Earl announced his "hospitable purpose," were Mr. and Miss Brandon; he called at their house and declared his resolution of not leaving it till Lucy (who was in her own room) consented to gratify him with an interview, and a promise to be the queen of his purposed festival. Lucy, teased by her father, descended to the drawing-room spiritless and pale; and the Earl, struck by the alteration of her appearance, took her hand, and made his inquiries with so interested and feeling a semblance of kindness, as prepossessed the father, for the first time, in his favour, and touched even the daughter. So earnest, too, was his request that she would honour his festivities with her

presence, and with so skilful a flattery was it conveyed, that the Squire undertook to promise the favour in her name; and when the Earl, declaring he was not contented with that promise from another, appealed to Lucy herself, her denial was soon melted into a positive though a reluctant assent.

Delighted with his success, and more struck with Lucy's loveliness, refined as it was by her paleness, than he had ever been before, Mauleverer left the house, and calculated with greater accuracy than he had hitherto done, the probable fortune Lucy would derive from her uncle.

No sooner were the cards issued for Lord Mauleverer's *fête*, than nothing else was talked of among the circles which, at Bath, people were pleased to term "the World."—Some time or other we intend more poetically than these pages will suffer us, to take notice of the amusements and pursuits of that said "World," in whatever corner of England it may be found. Grant us patience, Heaven,—power and patience, to tell the people of what stuff "Fashion" is made; while other novelists praise, imitate, exalt the vicious inanities of a hoary aristocracy, grown to that age when even the respectable crimes of its earlier youth sink into drivelling,—grant us the ability to expose and to deride them, and we will not ask the blessing to bequeath any other moral to our sons!

But, in the interim, caps are making, and talk flowing, at Bath; and when it was found that Lord Mauleverer—the good-natured Lord Mauleverer!—the obliging Lord Mauleverer!—was really going to be exclusive, and out of a thousand acquaintances to select only eight hundred, it is amazing how his popularity deepened into respect. Now, then, came anxiety and triumph,—she who was asked turned her back upon her who was not,—old friendships dissolved,—Independence wrote letters for a ticket, and, as England is the freest country in the world, all the Mistresses Hodges and Snodges begged to take the liberty of bringing their youngest daughters.

Leaving the enviable Mauleverer, the godlike occasion of so much happiness and wo, triumph and dejection, ascend with us, O reader, into those elegant apartments over the hair-dresser's shop, tenanted by Mr. Edward Pepper and Mr. Augustus Tomlinson:—the time was that of evening, Captain Clifford had been dining with

his two friends, the cloth was removed, and conversation was flowing over a table graced by two bottles of port, a bowl of punch for Mr. Pepper's especial discussion, two dishes of filberts, another of devilled biscuits, and a fourth of three Pomarian crudities, which nobody touched.

The hearth was swept clean, the fire burnt high and clear, the curtains were let down, and the light excluded. Our three adventurers and their room seemed the picture of comfort. So thought Mr. Pepper, for, glancing round the chamber, and putting his feet upon the fender, he said,

"Were my portrait to be taken, gentlemen; it is just as I am now that I would be drawn!"

"And," said Tomlinson, cracking his filberts—Tomlinson was fond of filberts—"were I to choose a home, it is in such a home as this that I would be always quartered."

"Ah! gentlemen," said Clifford, who had been for some time silent, "it is more than probable that both your wishes may be heard, and that ye may be drawn, quartered, and something else too, in the very place of your *desert*!"

"Well!" said Tomlinson, smiling gently, "I am happy to hear you jest again, Captain, though it be at our expense."

"Expense!" echoed Ned. "Ay! there 's the rub! who the deuce is to pay the expense of our dinner?"

"And our dinners for the last week?" added Tomlinson; "this empty nut looks ominous; it certainly has one grand feature, strikingly resembling my pockets."

"Heigho!" sighed Long Ned—turning his waistcoat commodities inside-out with a significant gesture, while the accomplished Tomlinson, who was fond of plaintive poetry, pointed to the disconsolate vacua, and exclaimed

"E'en while Fashion's brightest arts decoy
The heart desponding asks if *this* be joy."

"In truth, gentlemen," added he, solemnly depositing his nut-crackers on the table, and laying, as was his wont, when about to be luminous, his right finger on his sinister palm—"In truth, gentlemen, affairs are growing serious with us, and it becomes necessary forthwith to devise some safe means of procuring a decent competence."

"I am dunned confoundedly," cried Ned.

"And," continued Tomlinson, "no person of delicacy likes to be subjected to the importunity of vulgar creditors; we must therefore raise money for the liquidation of our debts. Captain Lovett, or Clifford, whichever you be styled, we call upon you to assist us in so praiseworthy a purpose!"

Clifford turned his eyes first on one, and then on the other, but made no answer.

"*Imprimis*," said Tomlinson; "let us each produce our stock in hand; for my part, I am free to confess—for what shame is there in that poverty which our exertions are about to relieve!—that I have only two guineas, four shillings, and three pence halfpenny!"

"And I," said Long Ned, taking a china ornament from the chimney-piece, and emptying its contents in his hand, "am in a still more pitiful condition. See, I have only three shillings and a bad guinea. I gave the guinea to the waiter at the White Hart, yesterday; the dog brought it back to me to-day, and I was forced to change it with my last shiner. Plague take the thing! I bought it of a Jew for four shillings, and have lost one pound five by the bargain!"

"Fortune frustrates our wisest schemes!" rejoined the moralizing Augustus. "Captain, will *you* produce the scanty wrecks of your wealth?"

Clifford, still silent, threw a purse on the table; Augustus carefully emptied it, and counted out five guineas; an expression of grave surprise settled on Tomlinson's contemplative brow, and extending the coins towards Clifford, he said, in a melancholy tone—

—"All your pretty ones?
Did you say all?"

A look from Clifford answered the interesting interrogatory.

"These, then," said Tomlinson, collecting in his hand the common wealth—"These, then, are all our remaining treasures!"—as he spoke, he jingled the coins mournfully in his palm, and gazing upon them with a parental air, exclaimed,

"Alas! regardless of their doom, the little victims play!"

"Oh, damn it!" said Ned, "no sentiment! Let us come to business at once. To tell you the truth, I, for

one, am tired of this heiress hunting, and a man may spend a fortune in the chase before he can win one."

"You despair then, positively, of the widow you have courted so long?" asked Tomlinson.

"Utterly!" rejoined Ned, whose addresses had been limited solely to the dames of the middling class and who had imagined himself at one time, as he punningly expressed it, sure of a *dear rib* from *Cheapside*. "Utterly; she was very civil to me at first, but when I proposed, asked me, with a blush, for my 'references.' 'References!' said I; 'why, I want the place of your husband, my charmer, not your footman!'—The dame was inexorable, said she could not take me without a character, but hinted that I might be the lover instead of the bridegroom; and when I scorned the suggestion, and pressed for the parson, she told me point blank, with her unlucky city pronunciation, 'That she would never accompany me to the Altar!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!" said Tomlinson, laughing. "One can scarcely blame the good lady for that. Love rarely brooks such permanent ties. But have you no other lady in your eye?"

"Not for matrimony:—all roads but those to the church!"

While this dissolute pair were thus conversing, Clifford, leaning against the wainscot, listened to them with a sick and bitter feeling of degradation, which, till of late days, had been a stranger to his breast. He was at length aroused from his silence by Ned, who bending forward, and placing his hand upon Clifford's knee, said, abruptly,

"In short, Captain, you must lead us once more to glory. We have still our horses, and I keep my mask in my pocket-book, together with my comb. Let us take the road to-morrow night, dash across the country towards Salisbury, and after a short visit in that neighbourhood to a band of old friends of mine—bold fellows, who would have stopped the Devil himself, when he was at work upon Stonehenge,—make a tour by Reading and Henley, and end by a plunge into London."

"You have spoken well, Ned!" said Tomlinson, approvingly. "Now, noble Captain, your opinion?"

"Messieurs," answered Clifford, "I highly approve of your intended excursion; and I only regret that I cannot be your companion."

"Not! and why?" cried Mr. Pepper, amazed.

"Because I have business here that renders it impossible; perhaps, before long, I may join you in London."

"Nay," said Tomlinson, "there is no necessity for our going to London, if you wish to remain here; nor need we at present recur to so desperate an expedient as the road—a little quiet business at Bath will answer our purpose; and for my part, as you well know, I love exerting my wits in some scheme more worthy of them than the highway—a profession meet for a bully than a man of genius. Let us then, Captain, plan a project of enrichment on the property of some credulous tradesman! why have recourse to rough measures, so long as we can find easy fools?"

Clifford shook his head. "I will own to you fairly," said he, "that I cannot at present take a share in your exploits: nay, as your chief, I must lay my positive commands on you to refrain from all exercise of your talents at Bath. Rob, if you please; the world is before you; but this city is sacred."

"Body o' me!" cried Ned, colouring, "but this is too good. I will not be dictated to in this manner."

"But, sir," answered Clifford, who had learned in his oligarchical profession the way to command, "but, sir, you shall, or if you mutiny, you leave our body, and then will the hangman have no petty chance of your own. Come! come! ingrate as you are, what would you be without me! How many times have I already saved that long carcass of thine from the rope, and now would you have the baseness to rebel? Out on you!"

Though Mr. Pepper was still wroth, he bit his lip in moody silence, and suffered not his passion to have its way; while Clifford, rising, after a short pause, continued: "Look you, Mr. Pepper, you know my commands, consider them peremptory. I wish you success, and plenty! Farewell, gentlemen!"

"Do you leave us already?" cried Tomlinson; "you are offended."

"Surely not!" answered Clifford, retreating to the door: "but an engagement elsewhere, you know!"

"Ay, I take you!" said Tomlinson, following Clifford out of the room, and shutting the door after him.

"Ay, I take you!" added he, in a whisper, as he arrested Clifford at the head of the stairs. "But tell me, how do you get on with the heiress?"

Smothering that sensation at his heart which made Clifford, reckless as he was, enraged and ashamed, whenever, through the lips of his comrades, there issued any allusion to Lucy Brandon, the chief replied, "I fear, Tomlinson, that I am already suspected by the old Squire! all of a sudden, he avoids me, shuts his door against me, Miss Brandon goes nowhere; and even if she did, what could I expect from her after this sudden change in the father?"

Tomlinson looked blank and disconcerted: "But," said he, after a moment's silence, "why not put a good face on the matter? walk up to the Squire, and ask him the reason of his unkindness?"

"Why, look you, my friend; I am bold enough with all others, but this girl has made me as bashful as a maid, in all that relates to herself. Nay, there are moments when I think I can conquer all selfish feeling, and rejoice for her sake that she has escaped me. Could I but see her once more—I could—yes! I feel—I feel I could—resign her for ever!"

"Humph!" said Tomlinson; "and what is to become of us? Really, my Captain, your sense of duty should lead you to exert yourself; your friends starve before your eyes, while you are shilly-shallying about your mistress. Have you no bowels for friendship?"

"A truce with this nonsense!" said Clifford, angrily.

"It is sense,—sober sense,—and sadness too;" rejoined Tomlinson. "Ned is discontented, our debts are imperious. Suppose, now,—just suppose,—that we take a moonlight flitting from Bath, will that tell well for you whom we leave behind? yet this we must do, if you do not devise some method of refilling our purses. Either, then, consent to join us in a scheme meet for our wants, or pay our debts in this city, or fly with us to London, and dismiss all thoughts of that love which is so seldom friendly to the projects of ambition."

Notwithstanding the manner in which Tomlinson made this threefold proposition, Clifford could not but acknowledge the sense and justice contained in it; and a glance at the matter sufficed to show how ruinous to his character, and therefore to his hopes, would be the flight of his comrades and the clamour of their creditors.

"You speak well, Tomlinson," said he, hesitating, "and yet for the life of me I cannot aid you in any scheme which may disgrace us by detection. Nothing can re-

concile me to the apprehension of Miss Brandon's discovering who and what was her suitor."

"I feel for you," said Tomlinson, "but give me and Pepper at least permission to shift for ourselves; trust to my known prudence for finding some method to raise the wind without creating a dust; in other words—(this d—d Pepper makes one so vulgar!)—of preying on the public without being discovered."

"I see no alternative," answered Clifford, reluctantly; "but, if possible, be quiet for the present; bear with me for a few days longer, give me only sufficient time once more to see Miss Brandon, and I will engage to extricate you from your difficulties!"

"Spoken like yourself, frankly and nobly!" replied Tomlinson: "no one has a greater confidence in your genius, once exerted, than I have!"

So saying, the pair shook hands and parted. Tomlinson rejoined Mr. Pepper.

"Well, have you settled any thing?" quoth the latter.

"Not exactly; and though Lovett has promised to exert himself in a few days, yet as the poor man is in love, and his genius under a cloud, I have little faith in his promises."

"And I have none!" said Pepper; "besides time presses! A few days!—a few devils! We are certainly scented here, and I walk about like a barrel of beer at Christmas, under hourly apprehension of being *tapped*!"

"It is very strange," said the philosophic Augustus; "but I think there is an instinct in tradesmen by which they can tell a rogue at first sight; and I can get (dress I ever so well) no more credit with my laundress than my friends the Whigs can with the people."

"In short, then," said Ned, "we must recur at once to the road! and on the day after to-morrow there will be an excellent opportunity: the old Earl, with the hard name, gives a breakfast, or feast, or some such mum-mery; I understand people will stay till after night-fall; let us watch our opportunity, we are famously mounted, and some carriage later than the general string may furnish us with all our hearts can desire!"

"Bravo!" cried Tomlinson, shaking Mr. Pepper heartily by the hand, "I give you joy of your ingenuity, and you may trust to me to make our peace afterward with Lovett; any enterprise that seems to him gallant

he is always willing enough to forgive; and as he never practises any other branch of the profession than that of the road—(for which I confess that I think him foolish);—he will be more ready to look over our exploits in that line than in any other more subtle but less heroic."

"Well, I leave it to you to propitiate the cove or not, as you please; and now that we have settled the main point, let us finish the lush!"

"And," added Augustus, taking a pack of cards from the chimney-piece, "we can in the mean while have a quiet game at cribbage for shillings."

"Done!" cried Ned, clearing away the dessert.

If the redoubted hearts of Mr. Edward Pepper, and that Ulysses of robbers, Augustus Tomlinson, beat high as the hours brought on Lord Mauleverer's *fête*, their leader was not without anxiety and expectation for the same event. He was uninvited, it is true, to the gay scene; but he had heard in public that Miss Brandon, recovered from her late illness, was certainly to be there; and Clifford, torn with suspense, and eager once more, even if for the last time, to see the only person who had ever pierced his soul with a keen sense of his errors, or crimes, resolved to risk all obstacles, and meet her at Mauleverer's.

"My life," said he, as he sat alone in his apartment, eyeing the falling embers of his still and lethargic fire, "may soon approach its termination; it is, indeed, out of the chances of things that I can long escape the doom of my condition; and when, as a last hope to raise myself from my desperate state into respectability and reform, I came hither, and meditated purchasing independence by marriage, I was blind to the cursed rascality of the action! Happy, after all, that my intentions were directed against one whom I so soon and so adoringly learned to love! Had I wooed one whom I loved less, I might not have scrupled to deceive her into marriage. As it is!—well!—it is idle in me to think thus of my resolution, when I have not even the option to choose when her father, perhaps, has already lifted the veil from my assumed dignities, and the daughter already shrinks in horror from my name. Yet I will see her! I will look once more upon that angel face—I will hear from her own lips, the confession of her scorn—I will see that bright eye flash hatred upon me, and I can then turn

once more to my fatal career, and forget that I have ever repented that it was begun. Yet, what else could have been my alternative? Friendless, homeless, nameless—an orphan, worse than an orphan—the son of a harlot, my father even unknown! yet cursed with early aspirations and restlessness, and a half-glimmering of knowledge, and an entire lust of whatever seemed enterprise—what wonder that I chose any thing rather than daily labour and perpetual contumely? After all, the fault is in fortune, and the world, not me! Oh! Lucy, had I but been born in your sphere; had I but possessed the claim to merit you, what would I not have done, and dared, and conquered for your sake!"

Such, or similar to these, were the thoughts of Clifford during the interval between his resolution of seeing Lucy, and the time of effecting it. The thoughts were of no pleasing, though of an exciting, nature; nor were they greatly soothed by the ingenious occupation of cheating himself into the belief, that if he was a highwayman, it was altogether the fault of the highways.

CHAPTER III.

Dream.—Let me but see her, dear Leontius.

Humorous Lieutenant.

Hempshirke.—It was the fellow, sure.

Wolfert.—What are you, sirrah?

Beggar's Bush.

O THOU divine Spirit, that through England burnest in every breast, inciting each with the sublime desire to be *fine*! that stirrest up the great to become little in order to seem greater, and that makest a Dutchess woo insult for a voucher! Thou that delightest in so many shapes, multivarious, yet the same; Spirit that makest the high despicable, and the lord meaner than his valet! equally great whether thou cheatest a friend, or cuttest a father! lackering all thou touchest with a bright vulgarity, that thy votaries imagine to be gold!—thou that sendest the few to fashionable balls and the many to fashionable novels;—that snifest even genius as well as folly, making the favourites of the former boast an acquaint-

ance they have not with the graces of a mushroom peerage, rather than the knowledge they have of the muses of an eternal Helicon!—thou that leavest in the great ocean of our manners no dry spot for the foot of independence;—that palest on the jaded eye with a moving and girdling panorama of daubed vilenesses, and fritterest away the souls of free-born Britons into a powder smaller than the angels which dance in myriads on a pin's point. Spirit! divine Spirit! carriest thou not beneath the mantle of frivolity a mighty and sharp sword, and by turning into contempt, while thou affectest to display, 'the solemn plausibilities of the world,' hastenest thou not to the great family of man the epoch of redemption? Whether, O Spirit! thou callest thyself Fashion, or Ton, or Ambition, or Vanity, or Cringing, or Cant, or any title equally lofty and sublime—would that from thy wings we could gain but a single plume! Fain would we, in fitting strain, describe the festivities of that memorable day, when the benevolent Lord Mauleverer received and blessed the admiring universe of Bath!

But to be less poetical, as certain writers say, when they have been writing nonsense—But to be less poetical, and more exact, the morning, though in the depth of winter, was bright and clear, and Lord Mauleverer found himself in particularly good health. Nothing could be better planned than the whole of his arrangements: unlike those which are ordinarily chosen for the express reason of being as foreign as possible to the nature of our climate, all at Lord Mauleverer's were made suitable to a Greenland atmosphere. The temples and summer-houses, interspersed through the grounds, were fitted up, some as Esquimaux huts, others as Russian pavilions; fires were carefully kept up; the musicians, Mauleverer took care, should have as much wine as they pleased: they were set skilfully in places where they were unseen, but where they could be heard. One or two temporary buildings were erected for those who loved dancing; and as Mauleverer, miscalculating on the principles of human nature, thought *gentlemen* might be averse from ostentatious exhibition, he had hired persons to skate minuets, and figures of eight upon his lakes, for the amusement of those who were fond of skating. All people who would be kind enough to dress in strange

costumes, and make odd noises, which they called singing, the Earl had carefully engaged, and planted in the best places for making them look still stranger than they were.

There was also plenty to eat, and more than plenty to drink. Mauleverer knew well that our countrymen and countrywomen, whatever be their rank, like to have their spirits exalted. In short, the whole *déjeuné* was so admirably contrived, that it was probable the guests would not look much more melancholy during the amusements, than they would have done had they been otherwise engaged at a funeral.

Lucy and the Squire were among the first arrivals.

Mauleverer, approaching the father and daughter, *with his most Devonshire-house manner*, insisted on taking the latter under his own escort, and being her Cicerone through the round of preparations.

As the crowd thickened, and it was observed how gallant were the attentions testified towards Lucy by the host, many and envious were the whispers of the guests! Those good people, naturally angry at the thought that two individuals should be married, divided themselves into two parties; one abused Lucy, and the other Mauleverer; the former vituperated *her* art, the latter *his* folly. "I thought she would play her cards well—deceitful creature!" said the one. "January and May," muttered another; "the man's sixty!" It was noticeable, that the party against Lucy was chiefly composed of ladies, that against Mauleverer, of men; that conduct must indeed be heinous, which draws down the indignation of one's own sex!

Unconscious of her crimes, Lucy moved along, leaning on the arm of the gallant Earl, and languidly smiling, with her heart far away, at his endeavours to amuse her. There was something interesting in the mere contrast of the pair; so touching seemed the beauty of the young girl, with her delicate cheek, maiden form, drooping eyelid, and quiet simplicity of air, in comparison to the worldly countenance and artificial grace of her companion.

After some time, when they were in a sequestered part of the grounds, Mauleverer, observing that none were near, entered a rude hut, and so fascinated was he at that moment by the beauty of his guest, and so meet to him seemed the opportunity of his confession, that he

with difficulty suppressed the avowal rising to his lips, and took the more prudent plan of first sounding and preparing, as it were, the way.

"I cannot tell you, my dear Miss Brandon," said he, slightly pressing the beautiful hand leaning on his arm, "how happy I am to see you the guest, the queen, rather, of my house! Ah! could the bloom of youth return with its feelings! Time is never so cruel as when, while stealing from us the power to please, he leaves us in full vigour the unhappy privilege to be charmed!"

Mauleverer expected at least a blushing contradiction to the implied application of a sentiment so affectingly expressed; he was disappointed. Lucy, less alive than usual to the sentimental, or its reverse, scarcely perceived his meaning, and answered, simply, "That it was very true." "This comes of being, like my friend Burke, too refined for one's audience," thought Mauleverer, wincing a little from the unexpected reply. "And yet," he resumed, "I would not forego my power to admire, futile—nay, painful as it is. Even now while I gaze on you, my heart tells me that the pleasure I enjoy, it is at your command, at once, and for ever, to blight into misery; but while it tells me, I gaze on!"

Lucy raised her eyes, and something of her natural archness played in their expression.

"I believe, my Lord," said she, moving from the hut, "that it would be better to join your guests: walls have ears; and what would be the gay Lord Mauleverer's self-reproach, if he heard again of his fine compliments to——"

"The most charming person in Europe!" cried Mauleverer, vehemently, and the hand which he before touched, he now clasped; at that instant Lucy saw opposite to her, half-hid by a copse of evergreens, the figure of Clifford. His face, which seemed pale and wan, was not directed towards the place where she stood: and he evidently did not perceive Mauleverer or herself, yet so great was the effect that this glimpse of him produced on Lucy, that she trembled violently, and unconsciously uttering a faint cry, snatched her hand from Mauleverer.

The Earl started, and catching the expression of her eyes, turned instantly towards the spot to which her gaze seemed riveted. He had not heard the rustling of

the boughs, but he saw with his habitual quickness of remark, that they still trembled, as if lately displaced, and he caught through their interstices the glimpse of a receding figure. He sprang forward with an agility very uncommon to his usual movements; but before he gained the copse, every vestige of the intruder had vanished.

What slaves we are to the moment! As Mauleverer turned back to rejoin Lucy, who, agitated almost to fainting, leaned against the rude wall of the hut, he would as soon have thought of flying as of making that generous offer of self, &c. which the instant before he had been burning to render Lucy. The vain are always confoundedly jealous, and Mauleverer remembering Clifford, and Lucy's blushes in dancing with him, instantly accounted for her agitation and its cause. With a very grave air he approached the object of his late adoration, and requested to know if it were not some abrupt intruder that had occasioned her alarm. Lucy, scarcely knowing what she said, answered, in a low voice, "That it was, indeed!" and begged instantly to rejoin her father. Mauleverer offered his arm with great dignity, and the pair passed into the frequented part of the grounds, where Mauleverer once more brightened into smiles and courtesy to all around him.

"He is certainly accepted!" said Mr. Shrewd to Lady Simper.

"What an immense match for the girl!" was Lady Simper's reply.

Amid the music, the dancing, the throng, the noise, Lucy found it easy to recover herself; and disengaging her arm from Lord Mauleverer, as she perceived her father, she rejoined the Squire, and remained a patient listener to his remarks, till, late in the noon, it became an understood matter that people were expected to go into a long room in order to eat and drink. Mauleverer, now alive to the duties of his situation, and feeling exceedingly angry with Lucy, was more reconciled than he otherwise might have been to the *etiquette* which obliged him to select for the object of his hospitable cares an old dowager Dutchess, instead of the beauty of the *fête*; but he took care to point out to the Squire the places appointed for himself and daughter, which were, though at some distance from the Earl, under the providence of his vigilant survey.

While Mauleverer was deifying the dowager Dutchess, and refreshing his spirits with a chicken, and a medicinal glass of Madeira, the conversation near Lucy turned, to her infinite dismay, upon Clifford. Some one had seen him in the grounds, booted, and in a riding undress,—(in that day people seldom rode and danced in the same conformation of coat,)—and as Mauleverer was a precise person about those little matters of *etiquette*, this negligence of Clifford's made quite a subject of discussion. By degrees the conversation changed into the old inquiry as to who this Captain Clifford was; and just as it had reached that point, it reached also the gently deafened ears of Lord Mauleverer.

"Pray, my Lord," said the old Dutchess, "since he is one of your guests, you, who know who and what every one is, can possibly inform us of the real family of this beautiful Mr. Clifford?"

"One of my guests, did you say?" answered Mauleverer, irritated greatly beyond his usual quietness of manner: "really, your Grace does me wrong. He may be a guest of my valet, but he is assuredly not mine; and should I encounter him, I shall leave it to my valet to give him his *congé* as well as his invitation!"

Mauleverer, heightening his voice as he observed athwart the table an alternate paleness and flush upon Lucy's face, which stung all the angrier passions, generally torpid in him, into venom, looked round, on concluding, with a haughty and sarcastic air: so loud had been his tone, so pointed the insult, and so dead the silence at the table while he spoke, that every one felt the affront must be carried at once to Clifford's hearing, should he be in the room. And after Mauleverer had ceased, there was a universal nervous and indistinct expectation of an answer, and a scene; all was still, and it soon became certain that Clifford was not in the apartment. When Mr. Shrewd had fully convinced himself of this fact—(for there was a daring spirit about Clifford which few wished to draw upon themselves)—that personage broke the pause by observing that no man, who pretended to be a gentleman, would intrude himself, unasked and unwelcome, into any society; and Mauleverer, catching up the observation, said—(drinking wine at the same time with Mr. Shrewd)—that undoubtedly such conduct fully justified the rumours respecting Mr. Clifford, and utterly excluded him from

that rank to which it was before more than suspected he had no claim.

So luminous and satisfactory an opinion from such an authority once broached was immediately and universally echoed, and long before the repast was over, it seemed to be tacitly agreed that Captain Clifford should be sent to Coventry, and if he murmured at the exile, he would have no right to insist upon being sent from thence to the devil!

The good old Squire, mindful of his former friendship for Clifford, and not apt to veer, was about to begin a speech on the occasion, when Lucy, touching his arm, implored him to be silent; and so ghastly was the paleness of her cheek while she spoke, that the Squire's eyes, obtuse as he generally was, opened at once to the real secret of her heart. As soon as the truth flashed upon him, he wondered, recalling Clifford's great personal beauty and attentions, that it had not flashed upon him sooner, and leaning back on his chair, he sunk into one of the most unpleasant reveries he had ever conceived.

At a given signal the music for the dancers recommenced, and, at a hint to that effect from the host, persons rose without ceremony to repair to other amusements, and suffer such guests as had hitherto been excluded from eating to occupy the place of the relinquishers. Lucy, glad to escape, was one of the first to resign her situation, and with the Squire she returned to the grounds. During the banquet evening had closed in, and the scene now really became fairy-like and picturesque;—lamps hung from many a tree, reflecting the light through the richest and softest hues,—the music itself sounded more musically than during the day,—gipsy-tents were pitched at wild corners and copses, and the bright wood-fires burning in them blazed merrily upon the cold yet cheerful air of the increasing night. The view was really novel and inviting; and as it had been an understood matter that ladies were to bring furs, cloaks, and boots, all those, who thought they looked well in such array, made little groups, and scattered themselves about the grounds and in the tents. They, on the contrary, in whom "the purple light of love" was apt by the frost to be propelled from the cheeks to the central ornament of the face, or who thought a fire in a room quite as agreeable as a fire in a tent, remained

within, and contemplated the scene through the windows.

Lucy longed to return home, nor was the Squire reluctant, but, unhappily, it wanted an hour to the time at which the carriage had been ordered, and she mechanically joined a group of guests, who had persuaded the good-natured Squire to forget his gout, and venture forth to look at the illuminations. Her party was soon joined by others, and the group gradually thickened into a crowd; the throng was stationary for a few minutes before a little temple, in which fireworks had just commenced an additional attraction to the scene. Opposite to this temple, as well as in its rear, the walks and trees had been purposely left in comparative darkness, in order to heighten the effect of the fireworks.

"I declare," said Lady Simper, glancing down one of the alleys which seemed to stretch away into blackness—"I declare that seems quite a lover's walk! how kind in Lord Mauleverer!—such a delicate attention—"

"To your Ladyship!" added Mr. Shrewd, with a bow.

While, one of this crowd, Lucy was vacantly eyeing the long trains of light which ever and anon shot against the sky, she felt her hand suddenly seized, and at the same instant a voice whispered, "For God's sake read this now and grant my request!"

The voice, which seemed to rise from the very heart of the speaker, Lucy knew at once; she trembled violently, and remained for some minutes with eyes which did not dare to look from the ground. A note, she felt, had been left in her hand, and the agonized and earnest tone of that voice, which was dearer to her ear than the fulness of all music, made her impatient yet afraid to read it. As she recovered courage she looked around, and seeing that the attention of all was bent upon the fireworks, and that her father, in particular, leaning on his cane, seemed to enjoy the spectacle with a child's engrossed delight, she glided softly away, and entering unperceived one of the alleys, she read, by a solitary lamp that burned at its entrance, the following lines written in pencil and in a hurried hand, apparently upon a leaf torn from a pocket-book.

"I implore, I entreat you, Miss Brandon, to see me, if but for a moment. I purpose to tear myself away from the place in which you reside—to go abroad—to leave

even the spot hallowed by your footstep. After this night, my presence, my presumption, will degrade you no more. But this night, for mercy's sake, see me, or I shall go mad! I will but speak to you one instant; this is all I ask. If you grant me this prayer, the walk to the left where you stand, at the entrance to which there is one purple lamp, will afford an opportunity to your mercy. A few yards down that walk I will meet you—none can see or hear us. Will you grant this? I know not—I dare not think—but under any case, your name shall be the last upon my lips.

“P. C.”

As Lusy read this hurried scrawl, she glanced towards the lamp above her, and saw that she had accidentally entered the very walk indicated in the note. She paused—she hesitated;—the impropriety—the singularity of the request darted upon her at once; on the other hand, the anxious voice still ringing in her ear, the incoherent vehemence of the note, the risk, the opprobrium Clifford had incurred, solely—her heart whispered—to see her, all aided her simple temper, her kind feelings, and her love for the petitioner, in inducing her to consent. She cast one glance behind, all seemed occupied with far other thoughts than that of notice towards her; she looked anxiously before, all was gloomy and indistinct; but suddenly, at some little distance, she descried a dark figure in motion. She felt her knees shake under her, her heart beat violently; she moved onward a few paces, again paused, and looked back; the figure before her moved as in approach, she resumed courage, and advanced—the figure was by her side.

“How generous, how condescending, is this goodness in Miss Brandon!” said the voice, which so struggled with secret and strong emotion, that Lucy scarcely recognised it as Clifford’s. “I did not dare to expect it; and now—now that I meet you——” Clifford paused, as if seeking words; and Lucy, even through the dark, perceived that her strange companion was powerfully excited; she waited for him to continue, but observing that he walked on in silence, she said, though with a trembling voice, “Indeed, Mr. Clifford, I fear that it is very, very improper in me to meet you thus; nothing but the strong expressions in your letter—and—and—in short, my fear that you meditated some desperate design, at which I could not guess, caused me to yield to

your wish for an interview." She paused, and Clifford still preserving silence, she added, with some little coldness in her tone, "If you have really aught to say to me, you must allow me to request that you speak it quickly. This interview, you must be sensible, ought to end almost as soon as it begins."

"Hear me then!" said Clifford, mastering his embarrassment, and speaking in a firm and clear voice—"Is that true, which I have but just heard,—is it true that I have been spoken of in your presence in terms of insult and affront?"

It was now for Lucy to feel embarrassed; fearful to give pain, and yet anxious that Clifford should know, in order that he might disprove, the slight, and the suspicion which the mystery around him drew upon his name, she faltered between the two feelings, and without satisfying the latter, succeeded in realizing the fear of the former.

"Enough!" said Clifford, in a tone of deep mortification, as his quick ear caught and interpreted, yet more humiliating than the truth, the meaning of her stammered and confused reply. "Enough! I see that it is true, and that the only human being in the world to whose good opinion I am not indifferent, has been a witness of the insulting manner in which others have dared to speak of me!"

"But," said Lucy, eagerly, "why give the envious or the idle any excuse? Why not suffer your parentage and family to be publicly known? Why are you here?"—(and her voice sunk into a lower key)—"this very day, unasked, and therefore subject to the cavils of all who think the poor distinction of an invitation an honour? Forgive me, Mr. Clifford, perhaps I offend, I hurt you by speaking thus frankly; but your good name rests with yourself, and your friends cannot but feel angry that you should trifle with it."

"Madam!" said Clifford, and Lucy's eyes now growing accustomed to the darkness, perceived a bitter smile upon his lips, "my name, good or ill, is an object of little care to me. I have read of philosophers who pride themselves in placing no value in the opinions of the world. Rank me among that sect—but I am, I own I am, anxious that you alone, of all the world, should not despise me;—and now that I feel you do—that you must—every thing worth living or hoping for is past!"

"Despise you!" said Lucy, and her eyes filled with

tears—"Indeed, you wrong me and yourself. But listen to me, Mr. Clifford; I have seen, it is true, but little of the world, yet I have seen enough to make me wish I could have lived in retirement for ever; the rarest quality among either sex, though it is the simplest, seems to me good-nature; and the only occupation of what are termed fashionable people appears to be speaking ill of one another: nothing gives such a scope to scandal as mystery; nothing disarms it like openness. I know—your friends know, Mr. Clifford, that your character can bear inspection, and I believe for my own part, the same of your family. Why not then declare who and what you are?"

"That candour would indeed be my best defender," said Clifford, in a tone which ran displeasingly through Lucy's ear; "but, in truth, Madam, I repeat, I care not one drop of this worthless blood what men say of me; that time has passed, and for ever; perhaps it never keenly existed for me—no matter. I come hither, Miss Brandon, not wasting a thought on these sickening fooleries or on the hoary idler, by whom they are given! I came hither, only once more to see you—to hear you speak—to watch you move—to tell you—(and the speaker's voice trembled, so as to be scarcely audible)—to tell you, if any season for the disclosure offered itself, that I have had the boldness—the crime, to love—to love—O God! to adore you! and then to leave you for ever!"

Pale, trembling, scarcely preserved from falling by the tree against which she leaned, Lucy listened to this abrupt avowal.

"Dare I touch this hand," continued Clifford, as he knelt and took it, timidly and reverently; "you know not, you cannot dream, how unworthy is he who thus presumes—yet, not all unworthy, while he is sensible of so deep, so holy a feeling as that which he bears to you. God bless you, Miss Brandon!—Lucy, God bless you!—and if hereafter you hear me subjected to still blacker suspicion, or severer scrutiny than that which I now sustain—if even your charity and goodness can find no defence for me,—if the suspicion become certainty, and the scrutiny end in condemnation, believe, at least, that circumstances have carried me beyond my nature; and that under fairer auspices, I might have been other than I am!" Lucy's tear dropped upon Clifford's hand, as he spoke; and while his heart melted within him as he felt

it, and knew his own desperate and unredeemed condition, he added,

"Every one courts you—the proud, the rich, the young, the high-born, all are at your feet! you will select one of that number for your husband, may he watch over you as I would have done!—love you as I do, he *cannot*! Yes, I repeat it!" continued Clifford, vehemently, "he *cannot*! None amid the gay, happy, silken crowd of your equals and followers, *can* feel for you that single and overruling passion, which makes you to me, what all combined—country, power, wealth, reputation, an honest name, peace, common safety, the quiet of the common air, alike the least blessing and the greatest, are to all others! Once more, may God in heaven watch over you, and preserve you! I tear myself on leaving you from all that cheers, or blesses, or raises, or might have saved me!—Farewell!"

The hand which Lucy had relinquished to her strange suitor was pressed ardently to his lips, dropped in the same instant, and she knew that she was once more alone!

But Clifford, hurrying rapidly through the trees, made his way towards the nearest gate which led from Lord Mauleverer's domain; when he reached it, a crowd of the more elderly guests occupied the entrance, and one of these was a lady of such distinction, that Mauleverer, despite of his aversion from any superfluous exposure to the night air, had obliged himself to conduct her to her carriage. He was in a very ill-humour with this constrained politeness, especially as the carriage was very slow in relieving him of his charge, when he saw, by the lamplight, Clifford passing near him, and winning his way to the gate. Quite forgetting his worldly prudence which should have made him averse to scenes with any one, especially with a flying enemy, and a man with whom, if he believed aright, little glory was to be gained in conquest, much less in contest; and only remembering Clifford's rivalry and his own hatred towards him for the presumption, Mauleverer, uttering a hurried apology to the lady on his arm, stepped forward, and opposing Clifford's progress, said, with a bow of tranquil insult, "Pardon me, sir, but is it at *my* invitation, or that of one of my servants, that you have honoured me with your company this day?"

Clifford's thoughts at the time of this interruption were

of that nature before which all petty misfortunes shrink into nothing; if, therefore, he started for a moment at the Earl's address, he betrayed no embarrassment in reply, but bowing with an air of respect, and taking no notice of the affront implied in Mauleverer's speech, he answered—

"Your Lordship has only to deign a glance at my dress, to see that I have not intruded myself on your grounds with the intention of claiming your hospitality. The fact is, and I trust to your Lordship's courtesy to admit the excuse, that I leave this neighbourhood to-morrow, and for some length of time. A person whom I was very anxious to see before I left, was one of your Lordship's guests; I heard this, and knew that I should have no other opportunity of meeting the person in question before my departure; and I must now throw myself on the well-known politeness of Lord Mauleverer to pardon a freedom originating in a business very much approaching to a necessity!"

Lord Mauleverer's address to Clifford had congregated an immediate crowd of eager and expectant listeners, but so quietly respectful and really gentlemanlike were Clifford's air and tone in excusing himself, that the whole throng were smitten with a sudden disappointment.

Lord Mauleverer himself, surprised by the temper and deportment of the unbidden guest, was at a loss for one moment, and Clifford was about to take advantage of that moment and glide away, when Mauleverer, with a second bow, more civil than the former one, said—

"I cannot but be happy, sir, that my poor place has afforded you any convenience; but, if I am not very impertinent, will you allow me to inquire the name of my guest with whom you required a meeting?"

"My Lord," said Clifford, drawing himself up, and speaking gravely and sternly, though still with a certain deference—"I need not surely point out to your Lordship's good sense and good feeling, that your very question implies a doubt, and, consequently, an affront, and that the tone of it is not such as to justify that concession on my part which the farther explanation you require would imply!"

Few spoken sarcasms could be so bitter as that silent one which Mauleverer could command by a smile, and with this complimentary expression on his thin lips and raised brow, the Earl answered—"Sir, I honour the skill

testified by your reply; it must be the result of a profound experience in these affairs. I wish you, sir, a very good night, and the next time you favour me with a visit, I am quite sure that your motives for so indulging me will be no less creditable to you than at present."

With these words Mauleverer turned to rejoin his fair charge. But Clifford was a man who had seen in a short time a great deal of the world, and knew tolerably well the theories of society, if not the practice of its minutiae; moreover, he was of an acute and resolute temper, and these properties of mind, natural and acquired, told him that he was now in a situation in which it had become more necessary to defy than to conciliate. Instead, therefore, of retiring, he walked deliberately up to Mauleverer and said—

"My Lord, I shall leave it to the judgment of your guests to decide whether you have acted the part of a nobleman and a gentleman in thus, in your domains, insulting one who has given you such explanation of his trespass as would fully excuse him in the eyes of all considerate or courteous persons. I shall also leave it to them to decide whether the tone of your inquiry allowed me to give you any farther apology. But I shall take it upon *myself*, my Lord, to demand from you an immediate explanation of your last speech."

"Insolent!" cried Mauleverer, colouring with indignation, and almost for the first time in his life losing absolute command over his temper; "do you bandy words with me—begone, or I shall order my servants to thrust you forth."

"Begone, sir,—begone!" cried several voices in echo to Mauleverer, from those persons who deemed it now high time to take part with the powerful.

Clifford stood his ground, gazing around with a look of angry and defying contempt, which, joined to his athletic frame, his dark and fierce eye, and a heavy riding whip, which, as if mechanically, he half raised, effectually kept the murmurers from proceeding to violence.

"Poor pretender to breeding and to sense!" said he, disdainfully turning to Mauleverer, "with one touch of this whip I could shame you for ever, or compel you to descend from the level of your rank to that of mine, and the action would be but a mild return to your language. But I love rather to teach you, than to correct. Accord—

ing to my creed, my Lord, he conquers most in good breeding, who forbears the most—scorn enables me to forbear!—Adieu!”

With this, Clifford turned on his heel and strode away. A murmur, approaching to a groan, from the younger, or sillier part of the parasites (the mature and the sensible have no extra emotion to throw away), followed him as he disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.

Outlaw.—Stand, sir, and throw us that you have about you!

Val.—Ruffians, forego that rude, unclivil touch!

The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

ON leaving the scene in which he had been so unwelcome a guest, Clifford hastened to the little inn where he had left his horse. He mounted and returned to Bath. His thoughts were absent, and he unconsciously suffered the horse to direct its course whither it pleased. This was naturally towards the nearest halting-place which the animal remembered; and this halting-place was at that illustrious tavern in the suburbs of the town, in which we have before commemorated Clifford's re-election to the dignity of chief. It was a house of long-established reputation; and here news of any of the absent confederates was always to be obtained.—This circumstance, added to the excellence of its drink, its ease, and the electric chain of early habits, rendered it a favourite haunt, even despite their present gay and modish pursuits, with Tomlinson and Pepper; and here, when Clifford sought the pair at unseasonable hours, was he for the most part sure to find them. As his meditations were interrupted by the sudden stopping of his horse beneath the well-known sign, Clifford, muttering an angry malediction on the animal, spurred it onward in the direction of his own home. He had already reached the end of the street, when his resolution seemed to change, and muttering to himself, “Ay, I might as well arrange this very night for our departure!” he turned his horse's head backward, and was once more at the tavern door. He threw the bridle over an iron railing,

and, knocking with a peculiar sound at the door, was soon admitted.

"Are — and — here?" asked he of the old woman, as he entered, mentioning the cant words by which, among friends, Tomlinson and Pepper were usually known. "They are both gone on the sharps to-night," replied the old lady, lifting her unsnuffed candle to the face of the speaker with an intelligent look; "Oliver* is sleepy, and the lads will take advantage of his nap."

"Do you mean," answered Clifford, replying in the same key, which we take the liberty to paraphrase, "that they are out on any actual expedition?"

"To be sure," rejoined the dame. "They who lag late on the road, may want money for supper!"

"Ha! which road?"

"You are a pretty fellow for Captain!" rejoined the dame, with a good-natured sarcasm in her tone. "Why, Captain Gloak, poor fellow, knew every turn of his men to a hair, and never needed to ask what they were about. Ah, he *was* a fellow! none of your girl-faced mudgers, who make love to ladies, forsooth—a pretty woman need not look far for a kiss when he was in the room, I warrant, however coarse her duds might be; and lauk! but the Captain was a sensible man, and liked a cow as well as a calf."

"So, so! on the road are they?" cried Clifford, musingly, and without heeding the insinuated attack on his decorum. "But answer me, what is the plan?—Be quick."

"Why," replied the dame, "there's some swell cove of a Lord gives a blow-out to-day, and the lads, dear souls! think to play the queer on some straggler."

Without uttering a word, Clifford darted from the house and was remounted before the old lady had time to recover her surprise.

"If you want to see them," cried she, as he put spurs to his horse, "they ordered me to have supper ready at——" The horse's hoofs drowned the last words of the dame, and carefully rebolting the door, and muttering an invidious comparison between Captain Clifford and Captain Gloak, the good landlady returned to those culinary operations destined to rejoice the hearts of Tomlinson and Pepper.

* The moon

Return we ourselves to Lucy. It so happened that the Squire's carriage was the last to arrive; for the coachman, long uninitiated among the shades of Warlock into the dissipation of fashionable life, entered on his *début* at Bath with all the vigorous heat of matured passions for the first time released into the festivities of the ale-house, and having a milder master than most of his comrades, the fear of displeasure was less strong in his aurigal bosom than the love of companionship; so that during the time this gentleman was amusing himself, Lucy had ample leisure for enjoying all the thousand and one reports of the scene between Mauleverer and Clifford, which regaled her ears. Nevertheless, whatever might have been her feelings at these pleasing recitals, a certain vague joy predominated over all. A man feels but slight comparative happiness in being loved, if he know that it is in vain. But to a woman that simple knowledge is sufficient to destroy the memory of a thousand distresses, and it is not till she has told her heart again and again that she is loved, that she will even begin to ask if it be in vain.

It was a partially starlit, yet a dim and obscure night, for the moon had for the last hour or two been surrounded by mist and cloud, when at length the carriage arrived, and Mauleverer, for the second time that evening, playing the escort, conducted Lucy to the vehicle. Anxious to learn if she had seen, or been addressed by, Clifford, the subtle Earl, as he led her to the gate, dwelt particularly on the intrusion of that person, and by the trembling of the hand which rested on his arm, he drew no delicious omen for his own hopes. "However," thought he, "the man goes to-morrow, and then the field will be clear; the girl's a child yet, and I forgive her folly." And with an air of chivalric veneration, Mauleverer bowed the object of his pardon into her carriage.

As soon as Lucy felt herself alone with her father, the emotions so long pent within her forced themselves into vent, and leaning back against the carriage, she wept, though in silence, tears, burning tears, of sorrow, comfort, agitation, anxiety.

The good old Squire was slow in perceiving his daughter's emotion; it would have escaped him altogether, if, actuated by a kindly warming of the heart towards her, originating in his new suspicion of her love for Clifford,

he had not put his arm around her neck, and this unexpected caress so entirely unstrung her nerves, that Lucy at once threw herself upon her father's breast, and her weeping, hitherto so quiet, became distinct and audible.

"Be comforted, my dear, dear child" said the Squire, almost affected to tears himself, and his emotion, arousing him from his usual mental confusion, rendered his words less involved and equivocal than they were wont to be. "And now I do hope that you won't vex yourself; the young man is indeed—and, I do assure you, I always thought so—a very charming gentleman, there's no denying it. But what can we do? you see what they all say of him, and it really was—we must allow that—very improper in him to come without being asked. Moreover, my dearest child, it is very wrong, very wrong, indeed, to love any one, and not know who he is; and—and—but do n't cry, my dear love, do n't cry so; all will be very well, I am sure,—quite sure!"

As he said this, the kind old man drew his daughter nearer to him, and feeling his hand hurt by something she wore unseen which pressed against it, he inquired, with some suspicion that the love might have proceeded to love-gifts, what it was.

"It is my mother's picture," said Lucy, simply, and putting it aside.

The old Squire had loved his wife tenderly, and when Lucy made this reply, all the fond and warm recollections of his youth rushed upon him: he thought, too, how earnestly on her death-bed that wife had recommended to his vigilant care their only child now weeping on his bosom; he remembered how, dwelling on that which to all women seems the grand epoch of life, she had said, "Never let her affections be trifled with,—never be persuaded by your ambitious brother to make her marry where she loves not, or to oppose her, without strong reason, where she does; though she be but a child now, I know enough of her to feel convinced that if ever she love, she will love too well for her own happiness even with all things in her favour." These words, these recollections, joined to the remembrance of the cold-hearted scheme of William Brandon, which he had allowed himself to favour, and of his own supineness towards Lucy's growing love for Clifford, till resistance became at once necessary and too late, all smote him with a remorseful

sorrow, and, fairly sobbing himself, he said, "Thy mother, child! ah, would that she were living, she would never have neglected thee as I have done!"

The Squire's self-reproach made Lucy's tears cease on the instant, and, as she covered her father's hand with kisses, she replied only by vehement accusations against herself, and praises of his too great fatherly fondness and affection. This little burst, on both sides, of honest and simple-hearted love, ended in a silence full of tender and mingled thoughts; and as Lucy still clung to the breast of the old man, uncouth as he was in temper, below even mediocrity in intellect, and altogether the last person in age, or mind, or habit, that seemed fit for a confidant in the love of a young and enthusiastic girl, she felt the old homely truth, that under all disadvantages there are, in this hollow world, few in whom trust can be so safely reposed, few who so delicately and subtly respect the confidence, as those from whom we spring.

The father and daughter had been silent for some minutes, and the former was about to speak, when the carriage suddenly stopped. The Squire heard a rough voice at the horses' heads; he looked forth from the window to see, through the mist of the night, what could possibly be the matter, and he encountered in this action, just one inch from his forehead, the protruded and shining barrel of a horse-pistol. We may believe, without a reflection on his courage, that Mr. Brandon threw himself back into his carriage with all possible despatch, and at the same moment the door was opened, and a voice said, not in a threatening, but a smooth accent, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry to disturb you, but want is imperious! oblige me with your money, your watches, your rings, and any other little commodities of a similar nature!"

So delicate a request the Squire had not the heart to resist, the more especially as he knew himself without any weapons of defence; accordingly, he drew out a purse, not very full, it must be owned, together with an immense silver hunting-watch, with a piece of black riband attached to it: "There, sir," said he, with a groan, "do n't frighten the young lady."

The gentle applicant, who indeed was no other than the specious Augustus Tomlinson, slid the purse into his waistcoat-pocket, after feeling its contents with a rapid and scientific finger. "Your watch, sir," quoth

he, and as he spoke he thrust it carelessly into his coat-pocket, as a schoolboy would thrust a peg-top, "is heavy; but trusting to experience, since an accurate survey is denied me, I fear it is more valuable from its weight than its workmanship: however, I will not wound your vanity by affecting to be fastidious. But surely the young lady, as you call her,—(for I pay you the compliment of believing your word as to her age, inasmuch as the night is too dark to allow me the happiness of a personal inspection,)—the young lady has surely some little trinket she can dispense with; 'Beauty when unadorned,' you know, &c."

Lucy, who, though greatly frightened, lost neither her senses nor her presence of mind, only answered by drawing forth a little silk purse, that contained still less than the leathern convenience of the Squire; to this she added a gold chain: and Tomlinson, taking them with an affectionate squeeze of the hand, and a polite apology, was about to withdraw, when his sagacious eyes were suddenly stricken by the gleam of jewels. The fact was, that in altering the position of her mother's picture, which had been set in the few hereditary diamonds possessed by the Lord of Warlock, Lucy had allowed it to hang on the outside of her dress, and bending forward to give the robber her other possessions, the diamonds at once came in full sight, and gleamed the more invitingly from the darkness of the night.

"Ah, Madam!" said Tomlinson, stretching forth his hand, "you would play me false, would you? Treachery should never go unpunished. Favour me instantly with the little ornament around your neck!"

"I cannot—I cannot," said Lucy, grasping her treasure with both her hands,—“it is my mother's picture, and my mother is dead!"

"The wants of others, madam," returned Tomlinson, who could not for the life of him *rob immorally*, "are ever more worthy your attention than family prejudices. Seriously, give it, and that instantly; we are in a hurry, and your horses are plunging like devils, they will break your carriage in an instant—despatch!"

The Squire was a brave man on the whole, though no hero, and the nerves of an old fox-hunter soon recover from a little alarm. The picture of his buried wife was yet more inestimable to him than it was to Lucy, and at this new demand, his spirit was roused within him.

He clenched his fists, and advancing himself, as it were, on his seat, he cried, in a loud voice:

"Begone, fellow!—I have given you—for my own part I think so—too much already; and by G—d you shall not have the picture!"

"Do n't force me to use violence!" said Augustus, and putting one foot on the carriage-step, he brought his pistol within a few inches of Lucy's breast, rightly judging, perhaps, that the show of danger to her would be the best method to intimidate the Squire. At that instant, the valorous moralist found himself suddenly seized with a powerful gripe on the shoulder, and a low voice, trembling with passion, hissed in his ear. Whatever might be the words that startled his organs, they operated as an instantaneous charm; and to their astonishment, the Squire and Lucy beheld their assailant abruptly withdraw. The door of the carriage was clapped to, and scarcely two minutes had elapsed before the robber having remounted, his comrade—(hitherto stationed at the horses' heads)—set spurs to his own steed, and the welcome sound of receding hoofs smote upon the bewildered ears of the father and daughter.

The door of the carriage was again opened, and a voice, which made Lucy paler than the preceding terror, said,

"I fear, Mr. Brandon, the robbers have frightened your daughter. There is now, however, nothing to fear—the ruffians are gone."

"God bless me!" said the Squire, "why is that Captain Clifford?"

"It is! and he conceives himself too fortunate to have been of the smallest service to Mr. and Miss Brandon."

On having convinced himself that it was indeed to Mr. Clifford that he owed his safety, as well as that of his daughter, whom he believed to have been in a far more imminent peril than she really was,—(for to tell thee the truth, reader, the pistol of Tomlinson was rather calculated for show than use, having a peculiarly long bright barrel with nothing in it,)—the Squire was utterly at a loss how to express his gratitude; and when he turned to Lucy to beg she would herself thank their gallant deliverer, he found that, overpowered with various emotions, she had, for the first time in her life, fainted away.

"Good heavens!" cried the alarmed father, "she is dead,—my Lucy—my Lucy—they have killed her."

To open the door nearest to Lucy, to bear her from the carriage in his arms, was to Clifford the work of an instant; utterly unconscious of the presence of any one else—unconscious even of what he said, he poured forth a thousand wild, passionate, yet half-audible expressions; and as he bore her to a bank by the roadside, and, seating himself, supported her against his bosom, it would be difficult, perhaps, to say, whether something of delight—of burning and thrilling delight—was not mingled with his anxiety and terror. He chafed her small hands in his own—his breath, all trembling and warm, glowed upon her cheek, and once, and but once, his lips drew nearer, and breathing aside the dishevelled richness of her tresses, clung in a long and silent kiss to her own.

Meanwhile, by the help of his footman, who had now somewhat recovered his astonished senses, the Squire descended from his carriage, and approached with faltering steps the place where his daughter reclined. At the instant that he took her hand, Lucy began to revive, and the first action in the bewildered unconsciousness of awaking, was to throw her arm around the neck of her supporter.

Could all the hours and realities of hope, joy, pleasure, in Clifford's previous life, have been melted down and concentrated into a single emotion, that emotion would have been but tame to the rapture of Lucy's momentary and innocent caress! And at a later, yet no distant, period, when in the felon's cell the grim visage of Death scowled upon him, it may be questioned whether his thoughts dwelt not far more often on the remembrance of that delightful moment, than on the bitterness and ignominy of an approaching doom!

"She breathes—she moves—she wakes!" cried the father, and Lucy, attempting to rise, and recognising the Squire's voice, said, faintly, "Thank God, my dear father, you are not hurt! And are they really gone!—and where—where are we?"

The Squire, relieving Clifford of his charge, folded his child in his arms, while in his own elucidatory manner he informed her where she was and with whom. The lovers stood face to face to each other, but what delicious blushes did the night, which concealed all but

the outline of their forms, hide from the eyes of Clifford!

The honest and kind heart of Mr. Brandon was glad of a release to the indulgent sentiments it had always cherished towards the suspected and maligned Clifford; and turning now from Lucy, it fairly poured itself forth upon her deliverer. He grasped him warmly by the hand, and insisted upon his accompanying them to Bath in the carriage, and allowing the footman to ride his horse. This offer was still pending, when the footman, who had been to see after the health and comfort of his fellow-servant, came to inform the party in a dolorous accent, of something which, in the confusion and darkness of the night, they had not yet learned,—namely, that the horses and coachman were—gone!

"Gone!" said the Squire—"Gone!—why the villains can't—(for my part, I never believe, though I have heard such wonders of, those slights of hand)—have bagged them?"

Here a low groan was audible, and the footman, sympathetically guided to the spot whence it emanated, found the huge body of the coachman safely deposited, with its face downward, in the middle of the kennel. After this worthy had been lifted to his legs, and had shaken himself into intelligence, it was found, that when the robber had detained the horses, the coachman, who required very little to conquer his turbulent faculties, had—(he himself said, by a violent blow from the ruffian, though, perhaps, the cause lay nearer home)—quitted the coach-box for the kennel; the horses grew frightened, and after plunging and rearing till he cared no longer to occupy himself with their arrest, the highwayman had very quietly cut the traces, and by the time present, it was not impossible that the horses were almost at the door of their stables at Bath.

The footman who had apprized the Squire of this misfortune was, unlike most news-tellers, the first to offer consolation.

"There be an excellent public," quoth he, "about a half a mile on, where your honour could get horses; or mayhap, if Miss Lucy, poor heart, be faint, you may like to stop for the night."

Though a walk of half a mile in the dark night, and under other circumstances, would not have seemed a grateful proposition, yet at present, when the Squire's

imagination had only pictured to him the alternatives of passing the night in the carriage, or of crawling on foot to Bath, it seemed but a very insignificant hardship. And tucking his daughter's arm under his own, while in a kind voice he told Clifford "to support her on the other side," the Squire ordered the footman to lead the way with Clifford's horse, and the coachman to follow, or be d—d, which ever he pleased.

In silence Clifford offered his arm to Lucy, and silently she accepted the courtesy. The Squire was the only talker, and the theme he chose was not ungrateful to Lucy, for it was the praise of her lover. But Clifford scarcely listened, for a thousand thoughts and feelings contested within him; and the light touch of Lucy's hand upon his arm would alone have been sufficient to distract and confuse his attention. The darkness of the night, the late excitement, the stolen kiss that still glowed upon his lips, the remembrance of Lucy's flattering agitation in the scene with her at Lord Mauleverer's, the yet warmer one of that unconscious embrace, which still tingled through every nerve of his frame, all conspired with the delicious emotion which he now experienced at her presence and her contact, to intoxicate and inflame him. Oh, those burning moments in love, when romance has just mellowed into passion, and without losing anything of its luxurious vagueness, mingles the enthusiasm of its dreams with the ardent desires of reality and earth! *That* is the exact time, when love has reached its highest point—when all feelings, all thoughts, the whole soul, and the whole mind are seized and engrossed—when every difficulty weighed in the opposite scale seems lighter than dust—when to renounce the object beloved is the most deadly and lasting sacrifice—and when in so many breasts, where honour, conscience, virtue, are far stronger than we can believe them ever to have been in a criminal like Clifford, honour, conscience, virtue, have perished at once and suddenly into ashes before that mighty and irresistible fire.

The servant, who had previous opportunities of ascertaining the topography of the "public" of which he spoke, and who was perhaps tolerably reconciled to his late terror in the anticipation of renewing his intimacy with the "spirits of the past," now directed the attention of our travellers to a small inn just before them. Mine host

had not yet retired to repose, and it was not necessary to knock twice before the door was opened.

A bright fire, an officious landlady, a commiserate landlord, a warm potation, and the promise of excellent beds, all appeared to our Squire to make ample amends for the intelligence that the inn was not licensed to let post-horses; and mine host having promised forthwith to send two stout fellows, a rope, and a cart-horse, to bring the carriage under shelter,—(for the Squire valued the vehicle *because* it was twenty years old,)—and moreover to have the harness repaired, and the horses ready by an early hour the next day, the good-humour of Mr. Brandon rose into positive hilarity. Lucy retired under the auspices of the landlady to-bed, and the Squire having drank a bowl of bishop, and discovered a thousand new virtues in Clifford, especially that of never interrupting a good story, clapped the Captain on the shoulder, and making him promise not to leave the inn till he had seen him again, withdrew also to the repose of his pillow. Clifford remained below, gazing abstractedly on the fire for some time afterward; nor was it till the drowsy chambermaid had thrice informed him of the prepared comforts of his bed, that he adjourned to his chamber. Even then it seems that sleep did not visit his eyelids, for a wealthy grazier, who lay in the room below, complained bitterly the next morning of some person walking over-head “in all manner of strides, just for all the world like a apparition in boots.”

CHAPTER V.

Viola.—And dost thou love me?

Lysander.

Love thee, Viola?

Do I not fly thee when my being drinks

Light from thine eyes?—that flight is all my answer!

The Bride.—Act II. Scene 1.

THE curtain meditations of the Squire had not been without the produce of a resolve. His warm heart once re-opened to the liking he had formerly conceived for Clifford, he longed for an opportunity to atone for his past unkindness, and to testify his present gratitude:

moreover, he felt at once indignant at, and ashamed of, his late conduct in joining the popular and, as he now fully believed, the causeless prepossession against his young friend, and before a more present and a stronger sentiment, his habitual deference for his brother's counsels faded easily away. Coupled with these favourable feelings towards Clifford, were his sagacious suspicions, or rather certainty, of Lucy's attachment to her handsome deliverer; and he had at least sufficient penetration to perceive that she was not likely to love him the less for the night's adventure. To all this was added the tender recollection of his wife's parting words; and the tears and tell-tale agitations of Lucy in the carriage were sufficient to his simple mind, which knew not how lightly maiden's tears are shed and dried, to confirm the prediction of the dear deceased. Nor were the Squire's more generous and kindly feelings utterly unmixed with selfish considerations. *Proud*, but not the least *ambitious*, he was always more ready to confer an honour than receive one, and at heart he was secretly glad at the notion of exchanging, as a son-in-law, the polished and *unfamiliar* Mauleverer for the agreeable and social Clifford. Such in "admired disorder" were the thoughts which rolled through the teeming brain of Joseph Brandon, and before he had turned on his left side—which he always did preparatory to surrendering himself to slumber—the Squire had fully come to a determination most fatal to the schemes of the lawyer and the hopes of the Earl.

The next morning as Lucy was knitting

"The loose train of her amber-dropping hair"

before the little mirror of her chamber, which even through its dimmed and darkened glass gave back a face which might have shamed a Grecian vision of Aurora, a gentle tap at the door announced her father. There was in his rosy and comely countenance, that expression generally characteristic of a man pleased with himself, and persuaded that he is about to give pleasure.

"My dear child," said the Squire, fondly stroking down the luxuriance of his Lucy's hair, and kissing her damask cheek, "I am come to have some little conversation with you; sit down, now, and—(for my part I love to talk at my ease, and, by-the-by, shut the window, my love, it is an easterly wind)—I wish that we may come to a clear and

distinct understanding.—Hem!—give me your hand, my child,—I think on these matters one can scarcely speak too precisely, and to the purpose; although I am well aware—for, for my own part, I always wish to act to every one, to you especially, my dearest child, with the greatest consideration—that we must go to work with as much delicacy as conciseness. You know this Captain Clifford—'t is a brave youth, is it not?—well—nay, never blush so deeply, there is nothing—(for in these matters one can't have all one's wishes,—one can't have *every thing*)—*to be ashamed of!* Tell me now, child, dost think he is in love with thee?"

If Lucy did not immediately answer by words, her pretty lips moved as if she could readily reply, and finally they settled into so sweet and so assured a smile, that the Squire, fond as he was of "precise" conversation, was in want of no fuller answer to his question.

"Ay, ay, young lady," said he, looking at her with all a father's affection, "I see how it is. And, come now—what do you turn away for? dost think, if, as I believe, though there are envious persons in the world, as there always are when a man's handsome, or clever, or brave; though, by-the-way, which is a very droll thing in my eyes, they do n't envy, at least not ill-naturedly, a man for being a lord, or rich; but quite on the contrary, rank and money seem to make them think one has all the cardinal virtues.—Humph!—If, I say, this Mr. Clifford should turn out to be a gentleman of family,—for you know that is essential, since the Brandons have, as my brother has probably told you, been a great race many centuries ago;—dost think, my child, that thou couldst give up—(the cat is out of the bag)—this old lord, and marry a simple gentleman?"

The hand which the Squire had held was now with an arch tenderness applied to his mouth, and when he again seized it, Lucy hid her glowing face in his bosom; and it was only by a whisper, as if the very air was garrulous, that he could draw forth—(for now he insisted on a verbal reply)—her happy answer.

We are not afraid that our reader will blame us for not detailing the rest of the interview between the father and daughter, it did not last above an hour longer; for the Squire declared, that for his own part, he hated more words than were necessary. Mr. Brandon was the first to descend to the breakfast, muttering as he de-

ascended the stairs, "Well now, hang me if I am not glad that's off—(for I do not like to think much of so silly a matter)—my mind. And as for my brother, I sha' n't tell him till it's all over, and settled. And if he is angry, he and the old lord may—though I do n't mean to be unbrotherly—go to the devil together!"

When the three were assembled at the breakfast-table, there could not perhaps have been found any where a stronger contrast than that which the radiant face of Lucy bore to the haggard and worn expression that disfigured the handsome features of her lover. So marked was the change that one night seemed to have wrought upon Clifford, that even the Squire was startled and alarmed at it. But Lucy, whose innocent vanity pleased itself with accounting for the alteration, consoled herself with the hope of soon witnessing a very different expression on the countenance of her lover; and though she was silent, and her happiness lay quiet and deep within her, yet in her eyes and lip there was that which seemed to Clifford an insult to his own misery, and stung him to the heart. However, he exerted himself to meet the conversation of the Squire, and to mask as well as he was able the evidence of the conflict which still raged within him.

The morning was wet and gloomy; it was that drizzling and misty rain which is so especially nutritious to the growth of blue devils, and the jolly Squire failed not to rally his young friend upon his feminine susceptibility to the influences of the weather. Clifford replied, jestingly, and the jest, if bad, was good enough to content the railer. In this facetious manner passed the time, till Lucy, at the request of her father, left the room to prepare for their return home.

Drawing his chair near to Clifford's, the Squire then commenced in real and affectionate earnest his operations—these he had already planned—in the following order: they were first to inquire into, and to learn, Clifford's rank, family, and prospects;—secondly, having ascertained the proprieties of the outer man, they were to examine the state of the inner one;—and, thirdly, should our skilful inquirer find his guesses at Clifford's affection for Lucy confirmed, they were to expel the modest fear of a repulse, which the Squire allowed was natural enough, and to lead the object of the inquiry to a knowledge of the happiness that, Lucy consenting,

might be in store for him. While, with his wonted ingenuity, the Squire was pursuing his benevolent designs, Lucy remained in her own room, in such meditation and such dreams as were natural to a heart so sanguine and enthusiastic.

She had been more than half an hour alone, when the chambermaid of the hostelry knocked at her door, and delivered a message from the Squire, begging her to come down to him in the parlour. With a heart that beat so violently it almost seemed to wear away its very life, Lucy slowly, and with tremulous steps, descended to the parlour. On opening the door, she saw Clifford standing in the recess of the window; his face was partly turned from her, and his eyes downcast. The good old Squire sat in an elbow-chair, and a sort of puzzled and half-satisfied complacency gave expression to his features.

"Come hither, child," said he, clearing his throat; "Captain Clifford—a-hem!—has done you the honour—to—and I dare say you will be very much surprised—not that, for my own part, I think there is much to wonder at in it—but such may be my partial opinion—(and it is certainly very natural in me)—to make you a declaration of love. He declares, moreover, that he is the most miserable of men, and that he would die sooner than have the presumption to hope. Therefore you see, my love, I have sent for you, to give him permission to destroy himself, in any way he pleases; and I leave him to show cause why—(it is a fate that sooner or later happens to all his fellow-men)—sentence of death should not be passed against him." Having delivered this speech with more propriety of word than usually fell to his share, the Squire rose hastily; and hobbled out of the room.

Lucy sank into the chair her father had quitted, and Clifford approaching towards her, said, in a hoarse and low voice,

"Your father, Miss Brandon, says rightly, that I would die rather than lift my eyes in hope to you. I thought yesterday that I had seen you for the last time;—chance—not my own folly or presumption, has brought me again before you, and even the few hours I have passed under the same roof with you, have made me feel as if my love—my madness—had never reached its height till now. Oh, Lucy!" continued Clifford, in a more imper-

sioned tone, and as if by a sudden and irresistible impulse, throwing himself at her feet; "if I *could* hope to merit you—if I could hope to raise myself—if I could—but no—no—no! I am cut off from all hope, and for ever!"

There was so deep, so bitter, so heartfelt an anguish and remorse in the voice with which these last words were spoken, that Lucy, hurried off her guard, and forgetting every thing in wondering sympathy and compassion, answered, extending her hand towards Clifford, who, still kneeling, seized and covered it with kisses of fire.

"Do not speak thus, Mr. Clifford; do not accuse yourself of what I am sure, quite sure, you cannot deserve. Perhaps, forgive me, your birth, your fortune, are beneath your merits; and you have penetrated into my father's weakness on the former point; or, perhaps, you yourself have not avoided all the errors into which men are hurried; perhaps you have been imprudent, or thoughtless; perhaps you have—(fashion is contagious)—played beyond your means, or incurred debts;—these are faults, it is true, and to be regretted, yet not surely irreparable."

For that instant can it be wondered that all Clifford's resolution and self-denial deserted him, and lifting his eyes, radiant with joy and gratitude, to the face which bent in benevolent innocence towards him, he exclaimed, "No, Miss Brandon!—no Lucy!—dear, angel Lucy! my faults are less venial than these, but perhaps they are no less the consequence of circumstances and contagion; perhaps it may not be too late to repair them. Would you—you indeed deign to be my guardian, I might not despair of being saved!"

"If," said Lucy, blushing deeply, and looking down, while she spoke quick and eagerly, as if to avoid humbling him by her offer, "if, Mr. Clifford, the want of wealth has in any way occasioned you uneasiness, or—or error, do believe me—I mean *us*—so much your friends as not for an instant to scruple in relieving us of some little portion of our last night's debt to you."

"Dear, noble girl!" said Clifford, while there writhed upon his lips one of those smiles of powerful sarcasm that sometimes distorted his features, and thrillingly impressed upon Lucy a resemblance to one very different in reputation and character to her lover—"Do not attri-

bate my misfortunes to so petty a source; it is not money that I shall want while I live, though I shall to my last breath remember this delicacy in you, and compare it with certain base remembrances in my own mind. Yes! all past thoughts and recollections will make me hereafter worship you even more than I do now; while in your heart they will—unless Heaven grant me one prayer—make you scorn and detest me!”

“For mercy’s sake do not speak thus!” said Lucy, gazing in indistinct alarm upon the dark and working features of her lover; “scorn, detest you! impossible! how could I, after the remembrance of last night!”

“Ay! of last night,” said Clifford, speaking through his ground teeth: “there is much in that remembrance to live long in both of us: but you—*you*—fair angel!”—(and all harshness and irony, vanishing at once from his voice and countenance, yielded to a tender and deep sadness, mingled with a respect that bordered on reverence,)—“*you* never could have dreamed of more than pity for one like me,—*you* never could have stooped from your high and dazzling purity to know for me one such thought as that which burns at my heart for you,—*you*—yes, withdraw your hand, I am not worthy to touch it!” And clasping his own hands before his face, he became abruptly silent; but his emotions were but ill-concealed, and Lucy saw the muscular frame before her heaved and convulsed by passions which were more intense and rending because it was only for a few moments that they conquered his self-will and struggled into vent.

If afterward,—but *long* afterward, Lucy, recalling the mystery of his words, confessed to herself that they betrayed guilt, she was then too much affected to think of any thing but her love and his emotion. She bent down, and with a girlish and fond self-abandonment, which none could have resisted, placed both her hands on his: Clifford started, looked up, and in the next moment he had clasped her to his heart; and while the only tears he had shed since his career of crime fell fast and hot upon her countenance, he kissed her forehead, her cheek, her lips, in a passionate and wild transport. His voice died within him, he could not trust himself to speak; only one thought, even in that seeming forgetfulness of her and of himself, stirred and spoke at her breast—*flight*. The more he felt he loved—the more

tender and the more confiding the object of his love, the more urgent became the necessity to leave her. All other duties had been neglected, but he loved with a real love, and love which *taught* him *one* duty, bore him triumphantly through its bitter ordeal.

"You will hear from me to-night," he muttered; "believe that I am mad, accursed, criminal, but not utterly a monster! I ask no more merciful opinion!" He drew himself from his perilous position, and abruptly departed.

When Clifford reached his home, he found his worthy coadjutors waiting for him with alarm and terror on their countenances. An old feat in which they had signalized themselves, had long attracted the rigid attention of the police, and certain officers had now been seen at Bath, and certain inquiries had been set on foot, which protended no good to the safety of the sagacious Tomlinson and the valorous Pepper. They came, humbly and penitentially demanding pardon for their unconscious aggression of the Squire's carriage, and entreating their Captain's instant advice. If Clifford had before wavered in his disinterested determination; if visions of Lucy, of happiness and reform had floated in his solitary ride, too frequently and too glowingly before his eyes, the sight of these men, their conversation, their danger, all sufficed to restore his resolution. "Merciful God!" thought he, "and is it to the comrade of such lawless villains, to a man, like them, exposed hourly to the most ignominious of deaths, that I have for one section of a moment dreamed of consigning the innocent and generous girl, whose trust or love is the only crime that could deprive her of the most brilliant destiny?"

Short were Clifford's instructions to his followers, and so much do we do mechanically, that they were delivered with his usual forethought and precision,—“You will leave the town instantly; go not, for your lives, to London, or to rejoin any of your comrades. Ride for the Red Cave; there are provisions stored there, and, since our late alteration of the interior, it will afford ample room to conceal your horses. On the night of the second day from this, I will join you. But be sure that you enter the cave at night, and quit it upon no account till I come!”

“Yes!” said he, when he was alone, “I will join you again, but only to quit you. One more offence against the law, or at least one sum wrested from the swollen

hands of the rich, sufficient to equip me for a foreign army, and I quit the country of my birth and my crimes. If I cannot deserve Lucy Brandon, I will be somewhat less unworthy. Perhaps—why not? I am young, my nerves are not weak, my brain is not dull—perhaps I may in some field of honourable adventure win a name, that, before my deathbed, I may not blush to acknowledge to her!”

While this resolve beat high within Clifford's breast, Lucy sadly and in silence was continuing with the Squire her short journey to Bath. The latter was very inquisitive to know why Clifford had gone, and what he had avowed; and Lucy, scarcely able to answer, threw every thing on the promised letter of the night.

“I am glad,” muttered the Squire to her, “that he is going to write;” for, somehow or other, though I questioned him very tightly, he slipped through my cross-examination, and bursting out at once, as to his love for you, left me as wise about himself as I was before—no doubt—(for my own part, I do n't see what should prevent his being a great man *incog.*)—this letter will explain all!”

Late that night the letter came; Lucy, fortunately for her, was alone in her own room; she opened it, and read as follows:—

CLIFFORD'S LETTER.

“I have promised to write to you, and I sit down to perform that promise. At this moment, the recollection of your goodness, your generous consideration, is warm within me; and while I must use calm and common words to express what I ought to say, my heart is alternately melted and torn by thoughts which would ask words, oh, how different! Your father has questioned me often of my parentage and birth—I have hitherto eluded his interrogatories. Learn now who I am. In a wretched abode, surrounded by the inhabitants of poverty and vice, I recall my earliest recollections. My father is unknown to me as to every one—my mother! to you I dare not mention who or what she was;—she died in my infancy. Without a name, but not without an inheritance,—(my inheritance was large—it was infamy!)—I was thrown upon the world: I had received by accident some education, and imbibed some ideas, not natural to my situation; since then, I have played

many parts in life: books and men I have not so neglected, but that I have gleaned at intervals some little knowledge from both. Hence, if I have seemed to you better than I am, you will perceive the cause: circumstances made me soon my own master, they made me also one whom honest men do not love to look upon; my deeds have been, and my character is, of a par with my birth and my fortunes. I came, in the noble hope to raise and redeem myself, by gilding my fate with a wealthy marriage, to this city: I saw you, whom I had once before met. I heard you were rich.—Hate me, Miss Brandon, hate me!—I resolved to make your ruin the cause of my redemption. Happily for you, I scarcely knew you before I loved you—that love deepened—it caught something pure and elevated from yourself. My resolution forsook me; even now I could throw myself on my knees, and thank God that you—you, dearest and noblest of human beings—are not my wife. *Now* is my conduct clear to you? if not, imagine me all that is villainous—save in one point, where *you* are concerned—and not a shadow of mystery will remain. Your kind father, overrating the paltry service I rendered you, would have consented to submit my fate to your decision. I blush indignantly for him—for you—that any living man should have dreamed of such profanation for Miss Brandon. Yet I myself was carried away and intoxicated by so sudden and so soft a hope—even I dared to lift my eyes to you, to press you to this guilty heart, to forget myself, and to dream that you might be mine! Can you forgive me for this madness? And hereafter, when in your lofty and glittering sphere of wedded happiness, can you remember my presumption and check your scorn? Perhaps you think, that by so *late* a confession I have already deceived you. Alas! you know not what it costs me *now* to confess! I had only one hope in life—it was that you might still, long after you had ceased to see me, fancy me not utterly beneath the herd with whom you live. This burning, yet selfish vanity, I tear from me, and now I go where no hope can pursue me. No hope for myself, save one which can scarcely deserve the name, for it is rather a rude and visionary wish than an expectation:—It is, that under another name, and under different auspices, you may hear of me at some distant time; and when I apprise you that under that name you may recognise one

who loves you better than all created things, you may feel *then*, at least, no cause for shame at your lover. What will you be then? A happy wife—a mother—the centre of a thousand joys—beloved—admired—blest when the eye sees you and the ear hears! And this is what I ought to hope; this is the consolation that ought to cheer me;—perhaps a little time hence it will. Not that I shall love you less; but that I shall love you less burningly, and therefore less selfishly. I have now written to you all that it becomes you to receive from me. My horse waits below to bear me from this city, and for ever from your vicinity. For ever!—Ay, you are the only blessing *for ever* forbidden me. Wealth I may gain—a fair name—even glory—I may, perhaps, aspire to! to heaven itself, I may find a path; but of *you*, my very dreams cannot give me the shadow of a hope. I do not say, if you could pierce my soul while I write, that you would pity me. You may think it strange, but I would not have your *pity* for worlds; I think I would even rather have your hate—pity seems so much like contempt. But if you knew what an effort has enabled me to tame down my language, to curb my thoughts, to prevent me from embodying that which now makes my brain whirl, and my hand feel as if the living fire consumed it; if you knew what has enabled me to triumph over the madness at my heart, and spare what, if writ or spoken, would seem like the ravings or insanity, you would not, and you could not despise me, though you might abhor.

“And now, heaven guard and bless you! Nothing on *earth* could injure you. And even the wicked who have looked upon you learn to pray. *I have prayed for you!*”

Thus (abrupt and signatureless) ended the expected letter. Lucy came down the next morning at her usual hour, and, except that she was very pale, nothing in her appearance seemed to announce past grief or emotion. The Squire asked her if she had received the promised letter; she answered in a clear, though faint voice, that she had—that Mr. Clifford had confessed himself of too low an origin to hope for marriage with Mr. Brandon's family; that she trusted the Squire would keep his secret, and that the subject might never again be alluded to by either. If in this speech there was something alien to Lucy's ingenuous character, and painful to her mind, she

felt it, as it were, a duty to her former lover, not to betray the whole of that confession so bitterly wrong from him. Perhaps, too, there was in that letter a charm, which seemed to her too sacred to be revealed to any one. And mysteries were not excluded even from a love so ill-placed, and seemingly so transitory, as hers.

Lucy's answer touched the Squire in his weak point. "A man of decidedly low origin," he confessed, was utterly out of the question; nevertheless, the young man showed a great deal of candour in his disclosure. He readily promised never to broach a subject necessarily so unpleasant; and though he sighed as he finished his speech, yet the extreme quiet of Lucy's manner reassured him, and when he perceived that she resumed, though languidly, her wonted avocations, he felt but little doubt of her soon overcoming the remembrance of what he hoped was but a girlish and fleeting fancy. He yielded with avidity to her proposal to return to Warlock; and in the same week as that in which Lucy had received her lover's mysterious letter, the father and daughter commenced their journey home.

CHAPTER VI.

Butler.—What are these, sir?

Yeoman.—And of what nature—to what use?

Latroak.—Imagine!

THE TRAGEDY OF ROLLO.

Quickly.—He's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom
HENRY V.

THE stream of our narrative now conducts us back to William Brandon. The law-promotions previously intended were completed; and to the surprise of the public, the envied barrister, undergoing the degradation of knighthood, had, at the time we return to him, just changed his toilsome occupations for the serene dignity of the Bench. Whatever regret this wily and aspiring schemer might otherwise have felt at an elevation considerably less distinguished than he might reasonably have expected, was entirely removed by the hopes afforded to him by the Administration of a speedy translation to a more brilliant office; and it was whispered among those

not unlikely to foresee such events, that Sir William Brandon might even look beyond the rank of a Chief Justice and a Peer, and that the Woolsack itself was scarcely too high a station for the hopes of one possessed of such interest, such abilities; and, the democrats added, such accommodating principles. Just at this moment too, the fell disease, whose ravages Brandon endeavoured, as jealously as possible, to hide from the public, had appeared suddenly to yield to the skill of a new physician; and by the administration of medicines, which a man less stern or resolute might have trembled to adopt (so powerful and for the most part deadly was their nature), he passed from a state of almost insufferable torture to an elysium of tranquillity and ease: perhaps, however, the medicines which altered, also decayed his constitution; and it was observable that in two cases where the physician had attained a like success by the same means, the patients had died suddenly, exactly at the time when their cure seemed to be finally completed. However, Sir William Brandon appeared very little anticipative of danger. His manner became more cheerful and even than it had ever been before; there was a certain lightness in his gait, a certain exhilaration in his voice and eye, which looked the tokens of one from whom a heavy burden had been suddenly raised, and who was no longer prevented from the eagerness of hope by the engrossing claims of a bodily pain. He had always been bland in society, but now his courtesy breathed less of artifice,—it took a more hearty tone. Another alteration was discernible in him, and that was precisely the reverse of what might have been expected. He became more *thrifty*—more attentive to the expenses of life than he had been. Though a despiser of show and ostentation, and far too *hard* to be luxurious, he was too scientific an architect of the weaknesses of others, not to have maintained during his public career an opulent appearance, and a hospitable table. The profession he had adopted requires, perhaps, less of externals to aid it than any other; still Brandon had affected to preserve parliamentary as well as legal importance; and, though his house was situated in a quarter entirely professional, he had been accustomed to assemble around his hospitable board whosoever were eminent, in his political party, for rank or for talent. Now, however, when hospitality, and a certain largeness of expenses, better

became his station, he grew closer and more exact in his economy. Brandon never could have degenerated into a miser; money to one so habitually wise as he was, could never have passed from *means* into an *object*; but he had, evidently for some cause or another, formed the resolution to save. Some said it was the result of returning health, and a hope of a prolonged life, to which many objects, for which wealth is desirable, might occur. But when it was accidentally ascertained that Brandon had been making several inquiries respecting a large estate in the neighbourhood of Warlock, formerly in the possession of his family, the gossips—(for Brandon was a man to be gossiped about)—were no longer in want of a motive false or real, for the Judge's thrift.

It was shortly after his elevation to the Bench, and *before* these signs of change had become noticeable, that the same strange ragamuffin whom we have mentioned before, as introduced by Mr. Swoppem to a private conference with Brandon, was admitted to the Judge's presence.

"Well," said Brandon, impatiently, the moment the door was closed, "your news?"

"Vy, your Onor," said the man, bashfully, twirling a thing that stood proxy for a hat, "I thinks as ow I shall be hable to satisfy your vorship's Onor." Then approaching the Judge, and assuming an important air, he whispered—

"'T is as ow I thought!"

"My God!" cried Brandon, with vehemence. "And he is alive?—and where?"

"I believes," answered the seemingly confident of Sir William Brandon, "that he be's alive, and if he be's alive, may I flash my ivories in a glass case, if I does not ferret him out; but as to saying where he be at this nick o' the moment, smash me if I can!"

"Is he in this country?" said Brandon; "or do you believe that he is gone abroad?"

"Vy, much of one and not a little of the other!" said the euphonious confident.

"How, speak plain, man—what do you mean?"

"Vy, I means, your Onor, that I can't say where he is."

"And this," said Brandon, with a muttered oath,—
"this is your boasted news, is it? Dog, damned, damned dog, if you trifle with me, or play me false, I will hang you,—by the living God, I will!"

The man shrank back involuntarily from Brandon's vindictive forehead and kindled eyes; but with the cunning peculiar to low vice answered, though in a humbler tone—

"And vot good vill that do your Onor? if so be as ow you scrags I, vill that put your Vorship in the vay of finding *he*?"

Never was there an obstacle in grammar through which a sturdy truth could not break; and Brandon, after a moody pause, said in a milder voice,—“I did not mean to frighten you! never mind what I said; but you can surely guess whereabouts he is or what means of life he pursues, perhaps?”—and a momentary paleness crossed Brandon's swarthy visage:—“perhaps he may have been driven into dishonesty, in order to maintain himself!”

The informant replied with great *naïveté*, that “such a thing was not impossible!” and Brandon then entered into a series of seemingly careless but artful cross-questionings, which either the ignorance or the craft of the man enabled him to baffle. After some time, Brandon, disappointed and dissatisfied, gave up his professional task, and bestowing on the man many sagacious and minute instructions, as well as a very liberal donation, he was forced to dismiss his mysterious visitor, and to content himself with an assured assertion, that, if the object of his inquiries should not already be gone to the devil, the strange gentleman employed to discover him would certainly, sooner or later, bring him to the Judge.

This assertion, and the interview preceding it, certainly inspired Sir William Brandon with a feeling like complacency, although it was mingled with considerable alloy.

“I do not,” thought he, in concluding his meditations when he was left alone,—“I do not see what else I can do! Since it appears that the boy had not even a name when he set out alone from his wretched abode, I fear that an advertisement would have but little chance of even designating, much less of finding him, after so long an absence. Besides it might make me the prey to impostors, and in all probability he has either left the country, or adopted some mode of living which would prevent his daring to disclose himself!” This thought plunged the soliloquist into a gloomy abstraction, which lasted several minutes, and from which he started, muttering aloud—

"Yes, yes! I dare to believe, to hope it.—Now for the Minister, and the Peerage!" And from that time the root of Sir William Brandon's ambition spread with a firmer and more extended grasp over his mind.

We grieve very much that the course of our story should now oblige us to record an event which we would willingly have spared ourselves the pain of narrating. The good old Squire of Warlock Manor-house had scarcely reached his home on his return from Bath, before William Brandon received the following letter from his brother's gray-headed butler.

"HONNUR SIR,

"I send this with all speed, tho' with a heavy heart, to acquaint you with the sudden and (as it is feared by his loving friends and well wishers, which latter, to be sure, is all as knows him) dangerous illness of the Squire.* He was seized, poor dear gentleman (for God never made a better, no offence to your Honour), the moment he set footing in his Own hall, and what has hung round me like a mill-stone ever since, is that instead of his saying 'How do you do, Sampson?' as was his wont, whenever he returned from foreign parts, such as Bath, Lunnun, and the like; he said, 'God bless you, Sampson!' which makes me think somehow that it will be his last words; for he has never spoke since, for all Miss Lucy be by his bedside continual. She, poor dear, don't take on at all, in regard of crying and such woman's work, but looks nevertheless, for all the world, just like a corpse. I sends Tom the postilion with this hexpress, nowing he is a good hand at a gallop, having, not sixteen year ago, beat some o' the best on un at a racing. Hoping as yer Honnur will lose no time in coming to this 'house of mourning,'

"I remane, with all respect,

"Your Honnur's humble sarvant to command,

"JOHN SAMPSON."

Sir William Brandon did not give himself time to re-read this letter, in order to make it more intelligible, before he wrote to one of his professional compeers, re-

* The reader, who has doubtless noticed how invariably servants of long standing acquire a certain tone from that of their master, may observe, that honest John Sampson had caught from the Squire the habit of parenthetical composition.

questing him to fill his place during his unavoidable absence, on the melancholy occasion of his brother's expected death; and having so done he immediately set off for Warlock. Inexplicable even to himself was that feeling, so nearly approaching to real sorrow, which the worldly lawyer felt at the prospect of losing his guileless and unspeculating brother. Whether it be that turbulent and ambitious minds, in choosing for their watering affections the very opposites of themselves, feel (on losing the fellowship of those calm, fair characters, that have never crossed their own rugged path) as if they lost, in losing them, a kind of haven for their own restless thoughts and tempest-worn designs!—be this as it may, certain it is, that when William Brandon arrived at his brother's door, and was informed by the old butler, who, for the first time, was slow to greet him, that the Squire had just breathed his last, his austere nature forsook him at once, and he felt the shock with a severity perhaps still keener than that which a more genial and affectionate heart would have experienced.

As soon as he had recovered his self-possession, Sir William made question of his niece, and finding that, after an unrelaxing watch during the whole of the Squire's brief illness, nature had failed her at his death, and she had been borne senseless from his chamber to her own, Brandon walked, with a step far different from his usual stately gait, to the room where his brother lay. It was one of the oldest apartments in the house, and much of the ancient splendour that belonged to the mansion ere its size had been reduced, with the fortunes of its successive owners, still distinguished the chamber. The huge mantel-piece ascending to the carved ceiling in grotesque pilasters, and scroll-work of the blackest oak, with the quartered arms of Brandon and Saville escutcheoned in the centre,—the panelled walls of the same dark wainscot,—the *armoires* of ebony,—the high-backed chairs, with their tapestried seats,—the lofty bed, with its hearse-like plumes and draperies of a crimson damask that seemed, so massy was the substance, and so prominent the flowers, as if it were rather a carving than a silk, all conspired, with the size of the room, to give it a feudal solemnity, not perhaps suited to the rest of the house, but well calculated to strike a gloomy awe into the breast of the worldly and proud man who now entered the death-chamber of his brother.

Silently, William Brandon motioned away the attendants, and, silently, he seated himself by the bed, and looked long and wistfully upon the calm and placid face of the deceased. It is difficult to guess at what passed within him during the space of time in which he remained alone in that room. The apartment itself he could not, at another period, have tenanted without secret emotion. It was that in which, as a boy, he had himself been accustomed to sleep; and, even then a schemer and an aspirant, the very sight of the room sufficed to call back all the hopes and visions, the restless projects, and the feverish desires which had now brought him to the envied state of an acknowledged celebrity and a shattered frame. There must have been something awful in the combination of those active remembrances with the cause which had led him to that apartment; and there was a homily in the serene countenance of the dead, which preached more effectually to the heart of the living than William Brandon would ever have cared to own. He had been more than an hour in the room, and the evening had already begun to cast deep shadows through the small panes of the half-closed window, when Brandon was startled by a slight noise. He looked up, and beheld Lucy opposite to him. She did not see him; but, throwing herself upon the bed, she took the cold hand of the deceased, and, after a long silence, burst into a passion of tears.

"My father!" she sobbed,—“my kind, good father, who will love me now?”

“I!” said Brandon, deeply affected; and, passing round the bed, he took his niece in his arms: “I will be your father, Lucy, and you—the last of our race—shall be to me as a daughter!”

CHAPTER VII.

Falsehood in him was not the useless lie
Of boasting pride or laughing vanity,—
It was the gainful—the persuading art; &c.

* * * * *

CRABBE.

On with the horses—off to Canterbury,
Tramp—tramp o'er pebble and splash—splash thro' puddle—
Hurrah!—how swiftly speed the post so merry!

* * * * *

Here laws are all inviolate!—none lay
Traps for the traveller—every highway's clear
Here;—he was interrupted by a knife,
With "Damn your eyes—your money or your life!"

DON JUAN

MISFORTUNES are like the creations of Cadmus—they destroy one another! Roused from the torpor of mind occasioned by the loss of her lover, at the sudden illness of the Squire, Lucy had no thought for herself—no thought for any one—for any thing but her father, till long after the earth had closed over his remains. The very activity of the latter grief was less dangerous than the quiet of the former; and when the first keenness of sorrow passed away, and her mind gradually and mechanically returned to the remembrance of Clifford, it was with an intensity less strong, and less fatal to her health and happiness than before. She thought it unnatural and criminal to allow any thing else to grieve her, while she had so sacred a grief as that of her loss; and her mind, once aroused into resistance to passion, betrayed a native strength little to have been expected from her apparent character. Sir William Brandon lost no time in returning to town after the burial of his brother. He insisted upon taking his niece with him; and, though with real reluctance, she yielded to his wishes, and accompanied him. By the Squire's will, indeed, Sir William was appointed guardian to Lucy, and she yet wanted more than a year of her majority.

Brandon, with a delicacy very uncommon to him where women (whom he hated) were concerned, provided every thing that he thought could in any way conduce to her

comfort. He ordered it to be understood in his establishment, that she was its mistress. He arranged and furnished, according to what he imagined her taste, a suite of apartments for her sole accommodation: a separate carriage and servants were appropriated to her use; and he sought, by perpetual presents of books, or flowers, or music, to occupy her thoughts, and atone for the solitude to which his professional duties obliged him so constantly to consign her. These attentions, which showed this strange man in a new light, seemed to bring out many little latent amiabilities, which were usually embedded in the callosities of his rocky nature; and, even despite her causes for grief, and the deep melancholy which consumed her, Lucy was touched with gratitude at kindness doubly soothing in one who, however urbane and polished, was by no means addicted to the little attentions that are considered so gratifying by women; and yet for which they so often despise, while they like him who affords them. There was much in Brandon that wound itself insensibly around the heart. To one more experienced than Lucy, this involuntary attraction might not have been incompatible with suspicion, and could scarcely have been associated with esteem; and yet for all who knew him intimately, even for the penetrating and selfish Mauleverer, the attraction existed: unprincipled, crafty, hypocritical, even base when it suited his purpose; secretly sneering at the dupes he made, and knowing no code save that of interest and ambition; viewing men only as machines, and opinions only as ladders;—there was yet a tone of powerful feelings sometimes elicited from a heart, that could at the same moment have sacrificed a whole people to the pettiest personal object: and sometimes with Lucy the eloquence or irony of his conversation deepened into melancholy, a half-suppressed gentleness of sentiment, that accorded with the state of *her own* mind and interested her kind feelings powerfully in *his*. It was these peculiarities in his converse, which made Lucy love to hear him, and she gradually learned to anticipate with a gloomy pleasure, the hour in which, after the occupations of the day, he was accustomed to join her.

"You look unwell, uncle, to-night," she said, when one evening he entered the room with looks more fatigued than usual; and, rising, she leaned tenderly over him, and kissed his forehead.

"Ay!" said Brandon, utterly unwon by, and even unheeding, the caress, "our way of life soon passes into the sear and yellow leaf; and when Macbeth grieved that he might not look to have that which should accompany old age, he had grown doting, and grieved for what was worthless."

"Nay, uncle, 'honour, faith, obedience, troops of friends,'—*these* surely were worth the sighing for?"

"Pooh! not worth a single sigh! The foolish wishes we form in youth have something noble, and something *bodily* in them; but those of age are utter shadows, and the shadows of pigmies! Why, what is honour, after all? What is this good name among men? only a sort of heathenish idol, set up to be adored by one set of fools, and scorned by another. Do you not observe, Lucy, that the man you hear most praised by the party you meet to-day, is most abused by that which you meet to-morrow? Public men are only praised by their party, and their party, sweet Lucy, are such base minions, it moves one's spleen to think one is so little as to be useful to them. Thus a good name is only the good name of a sect, and the members of that sect are only marvellous proper knaves."

"But posterity does justice to those who really deserve fame."

"Posterity! Can you believe that a man who knows what life is, cares for the penny whistles of grown children after his death? Posterity, Lucy,—no! Posterity is but the same perpetuity of fools and rascals; and even were justice desirable at their hands, they could *not* deal it. Do men agree whether Charles Stuart was a liar or a martyr? for how many ages have we believed Nero a monster! A writer now asks, as if demonstrating a problem, what real historian could doubt that Nero was a paragon? The Patriarchs of Scripture have been declared by modern Philosophy to be a series of astronomical hieroglyphs; and with greater show of truth it has been declared that the patriot Tell *never* existed. Posterity! the word has gulled men enough without my adding to the number. I, who loath the living, can scarcely venerate the unborn. Lucy, believe me, that no man can mix largely with men in political life, and not despise every thing that in youth he adored! Age leaves us only one feeling—contempt!"

"Are you belied, then?" said Lucy, pointing to a news-

paper, the organ of the party opposed to Brandon.—“Are you belied when you are here called ‘ambitious’?—When they call you ‘selfish’ and ‘grasping’—I know they wrong you; but I confess that I *have* thought you ambitious; yet can he who despises men desire their good opinion?”

“Their good opinion?” repeated Brandon, mockingly. “Do we want the bray of the asses we ride?—No!” he resumed after a pause. “It is *power*, not *honour*—it is the hope of elevating one’s self in every respect, in the world without, as well as in the world of one’s own mind: it is this hope which makes me labour where I might rest, and will continue the labour to my grave.—Lucy,” continued Brandon, fixing his keen eyes on his niece, “have you no ambition?—have power, and pomp, and place, no charm for your mind?”

“None!” said Lucy, quietly and simply.

“Indeed!—yet there are times when I have thought I recognised my blood in your veins. You are sprung from a once noble, but a fallen race. Are you ever susceptible to the weakness of ancestral pride?”

“You say,” answered Lucy, “that we should care not for those who live after us, much less, I imagine, should we care for those who have lived ages before!”

“Prettily answered,” said Brandon, smiling.—“I will tell you at one time or another what effect that weakness you despise already, once had, long after your age, upon me. You are early wise on some points—profit by my experience, and be so on *all*.”

“That is to say, in despising all men and all things;” said Lucy, also smiling.

“Well, never mind my creed; you may be wise after your own: but trust one, dearest Lucy, who loves you purely and disinterestedly, and who has weighed with scales balanced to a hair all the advantages to be gleaned from an earth, in which I verily think the harvest was gathered before we were put into it—trust me, Lucy, and never think love, that maiden’s dream, so valuable as rank and power: pause well before you yield to the former; accept the latter, the moment they are offered you. Love puts you at the feet of another, and that other a tyrant: rank puts others at your feet, and all those thus subjected are your slaves!”

Lucy moved her chair (so that the new position concealed her face), and did not answer; and Brandon, in an altered tone, continued—

"Would you think, Lucy, that I once was fool enough to imagine that love was a blessing, and to be eagerly sought for? I gave up my hopes, my chances of wealth, of distinction, all that had burned from the years of boyhood into my very heart. I chose poverty, obscurity, humiliation; but I chose also love. What was my reward? Lucy Brandon, I was deceived—deceived!"

Brandon paused, and Lucy took his hand affectionately, but did not break the silence. Brandon resumed.

"Yes, I was deceived! but I in my turn had a revenge, and a fitting revenge,—for it was not the revenge of hatred, but (and the speaker laughed sardonically) of contempt. Enough of this, Lucy! What I wished to say to you is this—grown men and women know more of the truth of things than ye young persons think for. Love is a mere bauble, and no human being ever exchanged for it one solid advantage without repentance. Believe this; and if rank ever puts itself under those pretty feet, be sure not to spurn the footstool."

So saying, with a slight laugh, Brandon lighted his chamber-candle, and left the room for the night.

As soon as the lawyer reached his own apartment, he indited to Lord Mauleverer the following epistle.

"Why, dear Mauleverer, do you not come to town? I want you,—your party wants you; perhaps the K—g wants you; and certainly, if you are serious about my niece, the care of your own love-suit should induce you yourself to want to come hither. I have paved the way for you, and, I think, with a little management you may anticipate a speedy success: but Lucy is a strange girl,—and perhaps, after all, though you ought to be on the spot, you had better leave her as much as possible in my hands. I know human nature, Mauleverer, and that knowledge is the engine by which I will work your triumph. As for the young lover, I am not quite sure whether it be not better for our sake, that Lucy should have experienced a disappointment on that score; for when a woman has once loved, and the love is utterly hopeless, she puts all vague ideas of other lovers altogether out of her head; she becomes contented with a husband *whom she can esteem!* sweet canter! But you, Mauleverer, want Lucy *to love you!* And so she will,—after you have married her! She will love you partly from the advantages she derives from you, partly from

familiarity (to say nothing of your good qualities). For my part, I think domesticity goes so far, that I believe a woman always inclined to be affectionate to a man whom she has once seen in his nightcap. However, you should come to town; my poor brother's recent death allows us to see no one,—the coast will be clear from rivals; grief has softened my niece's heart;—in a word, you could not have a better opportunity. Come!

"By-the-way, you say one of the reasons which made you think ill of this Captain Clifford was, your impression that, in the figure of one of his comrades, you recognised something that appeared to you to resemble one of the fellows who robbed you a few months ago. I understand that, at this moment, the police are in active pursuit of three most accomplished robbers; nor should I be at all surprised, if in this very Clifford were to be found the leader of the gang, viz. the notorious Lovett. I hear that the said leader is a clever and a handsome fellow, of a gentlemanlike address, and that his general associates are two men of the exact stamp of the worthies you have so amusingly described to me. I heard this yesterday from Nabben, the police-officer, with whom I once scraped acquaintance on a trial; and in my grudge against your rival, I hinted at my suspicion, that he, Captain Clifford, might not impossibly prove this Rinaldo Rinaldini of the roads. Nabben caught at my hint at once; so that, if it be founded on a true guess, I may flatter my conscience as well as my friendship, by the hope that I have had some hand in hanging this Adonis of my niece's. Whether my guess be true or not, Nabben says he is sure of this Lovett; for one of his gang has promised to betray him. Hang these aspiring dogs! I thought treachery was confined to politics; and that thought makes me turn to public matters,—in which all people are turning with the most edifying celerity."

* * * * *

Sir William Brandon's epistle found Mauleverer in a fitting mood for Lucy and for London. Our worthy peer had been not a little chagrined by Lucy's sudden departure from Bath, and while in doubt whether or not to follow her, the papers had informed him of the Squire's death, Mauleverer, being then fully aware of the im-

possibility of immediately urging his suit, and endeavoured, like the true philosopher he was, to reconcile himself to his hope deferred. Few people were more easily susceptible of consolation than Lord Mauleverer. He found an agreeable lady, of a face more unfaded than her reputation, to whom he intrusted the care of relieving his leisure moments from *cunni*; and being a lively woman, the *confidante* discharged the trust with great satisfaction to Lord Mauleverer, for the space of a fortnight, so that he naturally began to feel his love for Lucy gradually wearing away, by absence and other ties; but just as the triumph of time over passion was growing decisive, the lady left Bath, in company with a tall guardsman, and Mauleverer received Brandon's letter. These two events recalled our excellent lover to a sense of his allegiance; and there being now at Bath no particular attraction to counterbalance the ardour of his affection, Lord Mauleverer ordered the horses to his carriage, and, attended only by his valet, set out for London.

Nothing, perhaps, could convey a better portrait of an aristocrat than a sight of Lord Mauleverer's thin, fastidious features peering forth through the closed window of his luxurious travelling chariot! the rest of the outer man being carefully enveloped in furs, half a dozen novels strewing the seat of the carriage, and a lean French dog, exceedingly like its master, sniffing in vain for the fresh air, which, to the imagination of Mauleverer, was peopled with all sorts of asthmas and catarrhs! It was a fitting picture of an aristocrat, for these reasons;—because it conveyed an expression of indolence—of unwholesomeness—of luxury—of pride—and of ridicule! Mauleverer got out of his carriage at Salisbury, to stretch his limbs, and to amuse himself with a cutlet. Our nobleman was well known on the roads, and as nobody could be more affable; he was equally popular. The officious landlord bustled into the room, to wait himself upon his Lordship, and to tell all the news of the place.

"Well, Mr. Cheerly!" said Mauleverer, bestowing a penetrating glance on his cutlet, "the bad times, I see, have not ruined your cook!"

"Indeed, my Lord, your Lordship is very good, and the times, indeed, are very bad—very bad indeed. Is there enough gravy? Perhaps your Lordship will try the pickled onions!"

"The what!—onions!—oh!—ah! nothing can be better; but I never touch them. So, are the roads good?"

"Your Lordship has, I hope, found them good to Salisbury?"

"Ah! I believe so. Oh! to be sure, excellent to Salisbury. But how are they to London? We have had wet weather lately, I think!"

"No, my Lord. *Here*, the weather has been as dry as a bone."

"Or a cutlet!" muttered Mauleverer; and the host continued—

"As for the roads themselves, my Lord—so far as the roads are concerned, they are pretty good, my Lord! but I can't say as how there is not something about them that might be mended!"

"By no means improbable!—you mean the inns and the turnpikes?" rejoined Mauleverer.

"Your Lordship is pleased to be facetious;—no! I mean something worse than them!"

"What! the cooks?"

"No, my Lord,—the highwaymen!"

"The highwaymen!—indeed!" said Mauleverer, anxiously; for he had with him a case of diamonds, which at that time were, on grand occasions, often the ornaments of a gentleman's dress, in the shape of buttons, buckles, &c.; he had also a tolerably large sum of ready money about him, a blessing he had lately begun to find very rare:—"By-the-way, the rascals robbed me before on this very road. My pistols shall be *loaded* this time.—Mr. Cheerly, you had better order the horses; one may as well escape the night-fall!"

"Certainly, my Lord, certainly.—Jem, the horses immediately!—Your Lordship will have another cutlet!"

"Not a morsel!"

"A tart?"

"A dev—— not for the world!"

"Bring the cheese, John!"

"Much obliged to you, Mr. Cheerly, but I have dined; and if I have not done justice to your good cheer, thank yourself and the highwaymen.—Where do these highwaymen attack one?"

"Why, my Lord, the neighbourhood of Reading is, I believe, the worst part; but they are very troublesome all the way to Salthill."

"Damnation!—the very neighbourhood in which the

knaves robbed me before!—You may well call them *troublesome*! Why the deuce do n't the police clear the county of such a moveable species of trouble?"

"Indeed, my Lord, I do n't know; but they say as how Captain Lovett, the famous robber, be one of the set; and nobody can catch him, I fear!"

"Because, I suppose, the dog has the sense to bribe as well as bully.—What is the general number of these ruffians?"

"Why, my Lord, sometimes one, sometimes two, but seldom more than three."

Mauleverer drew himself up. "My dear diamonds, and my pretty purse!" thought he; "I may save you yet!"

"Have you been long plagued with the fellows?" he asked, after a pause, as he was paying his bill.

"Why, my Lord, we have, and we have not: I fancy as how they have a sort of haunt near Reading, for sometimes they are intolerable just about there, and sometimes they are quiet for months together! For instance, my Lord, we thought them all gone some time ago; but lately they have regularly stopped every one, though I hear as how they have cleared no great booty as yet."

Here the waiter announced the horses, and Mauleverer slowly re-entered his carriage, among the bows and smiles of the charmed spirits of the hostelry.

During the daylight, Mauleverer, who was naturally of a gallant and fearless temper, thought no more of the highwaymen,—a species of danger so common at that time, that it was almost considered disgraceful to suffer the dread of it to be a cause of delay on the road. Travellers seldom deemed it best to lose time in order to save money; and they carried with them a stout heart and a brace of pistols, instead of sleeping all night on the road. Mauleverer, rather a *preux chevalier*, was precisely of this order of wayfarers: and a night at an inn, when it was possible to avoid it, was to him, as to most rich Englishmen, a tedious torture most zealously to be shunned. It never, therefore, entered into the head of our excellent nobleman, despite his experience, that his diamonds and his purse might be saved from all danger, if he would consent to deposite them, with his own person, at some place of hospitable reception; nor, indeed, was it till he was within a stage of Reading, and

the twilight had entirely closed in, that he troubled his head much on the matter. But while the horses were putting to, he summoned the postboys to him, and after regarding their countenances with the eye of a man accustomed to read physiognomies, he thus eloquently addressed them :—

"Gentlemen,—I am informed that there is some danger of being robbed between this town and Salthill.—Now, I beg to inform you, that I think it next to impossible for four horses, properly directed, to be stopped by less than four men. To that number I shall probably yield; to a less number I shall most assuredly give nothing but bullets.—You understand me?"

The postboys grinned, touched their hats, and Mauleverer slowly continued—

"If, therefore,—mark me,—one, two, or three men stop your horses, and I find that the use of your whips and spurs are ineffectual in releasing the animals from the hold of the robbers, I intend with these pistols—you observe them—to shoot at the gentlemen who detain you; but as, though I am generally a dead shot, my eyesight wavers a little in the dark, I think it very possible that I may have the misfortune to shoot *you*, gentlemen, instead of the robbers! You see, the rascals will be close by you, sufficiently so to put you in jeopardy, unless, indeed, you knock them down with the butt-end of your whips. I merely mention this that you may be prepared. Should such a mistake occur, you need not be uneasy beforehand, for I will take every possible care of your windows; should it not, and should we reach Salthill in safety, I intend to testify my sense of the excellence of your driving, by a present of ten guineas a-piece! Gentlemen, I have done with you. I give you my honour, as a British nobleman, that I am serious in what I have said to you. Do me the favour to mount."

Mauleverer then called his favourite servant, who sat in the dickey in front (rumble-tumbles not being then in use)—

"Smoothson," said he, "the last time we were attacked on this very road, you behaved damnably. See that you do better this time, or it may be the worse for you. *You* have pistols to-night about you, eh! Well! that's right! And you are sure they're loaded. Very well! Now, then, if we are stopped, do n't lose a mo-

ment. Jump down and fire one of your pistols at the first robber. Keep the other for a sure aim. One shot is to intimidate, the second to slay. You comprehend? My pistols are in excellent order, I suppose. Lend me the ramrod. So, so! No trick this time!"

"They would kill a fly, my Lord, provided your Lordship fired straight upon it."

"I do not doubt you!" said Mauleverer, "light the lanterns, and tell the postboys to drive on!"

It was a frosty and tolerably clear night. The dusk of the twilight had melted away beneath the moon, which had just risen, and the hoary rime glittered from the bushes and the sward, breaking into a thousand diamonds, as it caught the rays of the stars. On went the horses, briskly, their breath steaming against the fresh air, and their hoofs sounding cheerily on the hard ground. The rapid motion of the carriage—the bracing coolness of the night—and the excitement occasioned by anxiety and the forethought of danger, all conspired to stir the languid blood of Lord Mauleverer into a vigorous and exhilarated sensation, natural in youth to his character, but utterly contrary to the nature he had imbibed from the customs of his manhood.

He felt his pistols, and his hands trembled a little, as he did so:—not the least from fear, but from that restlessness and eagerness peculiar to nervous persons placed in a new situation.

"In this country," said he to himself, "I have been only once robbed in the course of my life. It was then a little my fault; for before I took to my pistols, I should have been certain they were loaded. To-night, I shall be sure to avoid a similar blunder; and my pistols have an eloquence in their barrels which is exceedingly moving. Humph, another milestone. These fellows drive well; but we are entering a pretty-looking spot for Messieurs the disciples of Robin Hood!"

It was indeed a picturesque spot, by which the carriage was now rapidly whirling. A few miles from Maidenhead, on the *Henley* road, our readers will probably remember a small track of forest-like land, lying on either side of the road. To the left, the green waste bears away among trees and bushes; and one skilled in the country may pass from that spot, through a landscape as little tenanted as green Sherwood was formerly, into the chains of wild common and deep beech-woods which

border a certain portion of Oxfordshire, and contrast so beautifully the general characteristics of that county.

At the time we speak of, the country was even far wilder than it is now, and just on that point where the Henley and the Reading roads unite was a spot (communicating then with the waste land we have described), than which perhaps few places could be more adapted to the purposes of such true men as have recourse to the primary law of nature. Certain it was, that at this part of the road Mauleverer looked more anxiously from his window than he had hitherto done, and apparently the increased earnestness of his survey was not altogether without meeting its reward.

About a hundred yards to the left, three dark objects were just discernible in the shade; a moment more, and the objects emerging grew into the forms of three men, well mounted, and riding at a brisk trot.

"Only three!" thought Mauleverer, "that is well;" and leaning from the front window with a pistol in either hand, Mauleverer cried out to the postboys in a stern tone, "Drive on, and recollect what I told you!—Remember!" he added, to his servant. The postboys scarcely looked round, but their spurs were buried in their horses, and the animals flew on like lightning.

The three strangers made a halt, as if in conference: their decision was prompt. Two wheeled round from their comrade, and darted at full gallop by the carriage. Mauleverer's pistol was already protruded from the front-window, when to his astonishment, and to the utter baffling of his ingenious admonition to his drivers, he beheld the two postboys knocked from their horses one after the other with a celerity that scarcely allowed him an exclamation; and before he had recovered his self-possession, the horses taking fright (and their fright being skilfully taken advantage of by the highwaymen), the carriage was fairly whirled into a ditch on the right side of the road, and upset. Meanwhile, Smoothson had leaped from his station in the front, and having fired, though without effect, at the third robber, who approached menacingly towards him, he gained the time to open the carriage door, and extricate his master.

The moment Mauleverer found himself on *terra firma*, he prepared his courage for offensive measures, and he and Smoothson, standing side by side in front of the unfortunate vehicle, presented no unformidable aspect to the

enemy. The two robbers who had so decisively rid themselves of the postboys acted with no less determination towards the horses. One of them dismounted, cut the traces, and suffered the plunging quadrupeds to go whither they listed. This measure was not however allowed to be taken with impunity; a ball from Mauleverer's pistol passed through the hat of the highwayman with an aim so slightly erring, that it whizzed among the locks of the astounded hero with a sound that sent a terror to his heart, no less from a love of his head, than from anxiety for his hair. The shock staggered him for a moment; and a second shot from the hand of Mauleverer would have probably finished his earthly career, had not the third robber, who had hitherto remained almost inactive, thrown himself from his horse, which tutored to such docility remained perfectly still, and advancing with a bold step and a levelled pistol towards Mauleverer and his servant, said, in a resolute voice, "Gentlemen, it is useless to struggle; we are well armed, and resolved on effecting our purpose: your persons shall be safe, if you lay down your arms, and also such part of your property as you may particularly wish to retain. But if you resist, I cannot answer for your lives!"

Mauleverer had listened patiently to this speech in order that he might have more time for adjusting his aim: his reply was a bullet, which grazed the side of the speaker and tore away the skin, without inflicting any more dangerous wound. Muttering a curse upon the error of his aim, and resolute to the last, when his blood was once up, Mauleverer backed one pace, drew his sword, and threw himself into the attitude of a champion well skilled in the use of the instrument he wore.

But that incomparable personage was in a fair way of ascertaining what happiness in the world to come is reserved for a man who has spared no pains to make himself comfortable in this. For the two first and most active robbers having finished the achievement of the horses, now approached Mauleverer, and the taller of them, still indignant at the late peril to his hair, cried out in a Stentorian voice—

"By G—d! you old fool, if you don't throw down your toasting-fork, I'll be the death of you!"

The speaker suited the action to the word, by cocking an immense pistol; Mauleverer stood his ground, but

Smoothson retreated, and stumbling against the wheel of the carriage fell backward; the next instant, the second highwayman had possessed himself of the valet's pistols, and, quietly seated on the fallen man's stomach, amused himself by inspecting the contents of the domestic's pockets. Mauleverer was now alone, and his stubbornness so enraged the tall bully, that his hand was already on his trigger, when the third robber, whose side Mauleverer's bullet had grazed, thrust himself between the two.—“Hold, Ned!” said he, pushing back his comrade's pistol.—“And you, my Lord, whose rashness ought to cost you your life, learn that men can rob generously.” So saying, with one dexterous stroke from the robber's riding-whip, Mauleverer's sword flew upwards, and alighted at the distance of ten yards from its owner.

“Approach now,” said the victor to his comrades. “Ride the carriage, and with all despatch.”

The tall highwayman hastened to execute this order; and the lesser one having satisfactorily finished the inquisition into Mr. Smoothson's pockets, drew forth from his own pouch a tolerably thick rope; with this he tied the hands of the prostrate valet, moralizing as he wound the rope round and round the wrists of the fallen man, in the following edifying strain:—

“Lie still, sir, lie still, I beseech you; all wise men are fatalists; and no proverb is more pithy than that which says, ‘What can't be cured must be endured.’ Lie still, I tell you; little, perhaps, do you think that you are performing one of the noblest functions of humanity: yes, sir, you are filling the pockets of the destitute, and by my present action, I am securing you from any weakness of the flesh likely to impede so praiseworthy an end, and so hazard the excellence of your action. There, sir, your hands are tight,—lie still and reflect!”

As he said this, with three gentle applications of his feet, the moralist rolled Mr. Smoothson into the ditch, and hastened to join his lengthy comrade in his pleasing occupation.

In the interim, Mauleverer and the third robber (who in the true spirit of government, remained dignified and inactive while his followers plundered what he certainly designed to share, if not to monopolize), stood within a few feet of each other, face to face.

Mauleverer had now convinced himself, that all en-

deavour to save his property was hopeless, and he had also the consolation of thinking he had done his best to defend it. He therefore bade all his thoughts return to the care of his person. He adjusted his fur collar around his neck with great *sang froid*, drew on his gloves, and, patting his terrified poodle, who sat shivering on its haunches with one paw raised, and nervously trembling, he said—

"You, sir, seem to be a civil person, and I really should have felt quite sorry if I had had the misfortune to wound you. You are not hurt, I trust. Pray, if I may inquire, how am I to proceed? my carriage is in the ditch, and my horses by this time are probably at the end of the world."

"As for that matter," said the robber, whose face, like those of his comrades, was closely masked in the approved fashion of highwaymen of that day, "I believe you will have to walk to Maidenhead,—it is not far, and the night is fine!"

"A very trifling hardship, indeed!" said Mauleverer, ironically; but his new acquaintance made no reply, nor did he appear at all desirous of entering into any farther conversation with Mauleverer.

The Earl, therefore, after watching the operations of the other robbers for some moments, turned on his heel, and remained humming an opera tune, with dignified indifference, until the pair had finished rifling the carriage, and, seizing Mauleverer, proceeded to rifle *him*.

With a curled lip and a raised brow, that supreme personage suffered himself to be, as the taller robber expressed it, "cleaned out." His watch, his rings, his purse, and his snuff-box, all went. It was long since the rascals had captured such a booty.

They had scarcely finished, when the postboys, who had now begun to look about them, uttered a simultaneous cry, and, at some distance, a wagon was seen heavily approaching. Mauleverer really wanted his money, to say nothing of his diamonds; and so soon as he perceived assistance at hand, a new hope darted within him. His sword still lay on the ground; he sprang towards it—seized it, uttered a shout for help, and threw himself fiercely on the highwayman who had disarmed him; but the robber, warding off the blade with his whip, retreated to his saddle, which he managed, despite of Mauleverer's lunges, to regain with impunity.

The other two had already mounted, and within a minute afterward, not a vestige of the trio was visible. "This is what may fairly be called *single blessedness!*" said Mauleverer, as, dropping his useless sword, he thrust his hands into his pockets.

Leaving our peerless peer to find his way to Maiden-head on foot, accompanied (to say nothing of the poodle) by one waggoner, two postboys, and the released Mr. Smoothson, all four charming him with their condolences, we follow with our story the steps of the three *alieni appetentes*.

CHAPTER VIII.

The rogues were very merry on the booty. They said a thousand things that showed the wickedness of their morals.—GIL BLAS.

They fixed on a spot where they made a cave, which was large enough to receive them and their horses. This cave was enclosed within a sort of thicket of bushes and brambles. From this station they used to issue, &c.

MEMOIRS OF RICHARD TURPIN.

It was not for several minutes after their flight had commenced, that any conversation passed between the robbers. Their horses flew on like wind, and the country through which they rode presented to their speed no other obstacle than an occasional hedge, or a short cut through the thicknesses of some leafless beechwood. The stars lent them a merry light, and the spirits of two of them at least were fully in sympathy with the exhilaration of the pace and the air. Perhaps, in the third, a certain presentiment that the present adventure would end less merrily than it had begun, conspired, with other causes of gloom, to check that exaltation of the blood which generally follows a successful exploit.

The path which the robbers took wound by the sides of long woods, or across large tracts of uncultivated land. Nor did they encounter any thing living by the road, save now and then a solitary owl, wheeling its gray body around the skirts of the bare woods, or occasionally troops of conies pursuing their sports and enjoying their midnight food in the fields.

"Heavens!" cried the tall robber, whose incognito we need no longer preserve, and who, as our readers are doubtless aware, answered to the name of Pepper,—

"Heavens!" cried he, looking upward at the starry skies in a sort of ecstasy, "what a jolly life this is! Some fellows like hunting, damn it; what hunting is like the road? If there be sport in hunting down a nasty fox, how much more is there in hunting down a nice clean nobleman's carriage! If there be joy in getting a brush, how much more is there in getting a purse! If it be pleasant to fly over a hedge in the broad daylight, hang me if it be not ten times finer sport to skim it by night,—here goes! Look how the hedges run away from us, and the silly old moon dances about, as if the sight of us put the good lady in spirits! Those old maids are always glad to have an eye upon such fine dashing young fellows."

"Ay," cried the more erudite and sententious Augustus Tomlinson, roused by success from his usual philosophical sobriety. "No work is so pleasant as nightwork, and the witches our ancestors burned were in the right to ride out on their broomsticks, with the owls and the stars. We are their successors *now*, Ned. We are your true fly-by-nights!"

"Only," quoth Ned, "we are a cursed deal more clever than they were; for they played their game without being a bit the richer for it, and we—I say, Tomlinson, where the devil did you put that red morocco case?"

"Experience never enlightens the foolish!" said Tomlinson, "or you would have known, without asking, that I had put it in the very safest pocket in my coat. 'Gad, how heavy it is!'"

"Well!" cried Pepper, "I can't say I wish it were lighter! Only think of our robbing my Lord twice, and on the same road too!"

"I say, Lovett," exclaimed Tomlinson, "was it not odd that we should have stumbled upon our Bath friend so unceremoniously? Lucky for us, that we are so strict in robbing in masks! He would not have thought the better of Bath company, if he had seen our faces."

Lovett, or rather Clifford, had hitherto been silent. He now turned slowly in his saddle, and said—"As it was, the poor devil was very nearly despatched. Long Ned was making short work with him—if I had not interposed!"

"And why did you?" said Ned.

"Because I will have no killing: it is the curse of the noble art of our profession, to have passionate professors like thee."

"Passionate!" repeated Ned: "well, I am a little choleric, I own it; but that is not so great a fault on the road as it would be in house-breaking. I do n't know a thing that requires so much coolness and self-possession as cleaning out a house from top to bottom,—quietly and civilly, mind you!"

"That is the reason, I suppose, then," said Augustus, "that you altogether renounced *that* career. Your first adventure was house-breaking, I think I have heard you say. I confess, it was a vulgar *début*—not worthy of you!"

"No!—Harry Cook seduced me! but the specimen I saw that night disgusted me of picking locks; it brings one in contact with such low companions; only think, there was a merchant—a rag-merchant one of the party!"

"Faugh!" said Tomlinson, in solemn disgust.

"Ay, you may well turn up your lip: I never broke into a house again."

"Who were your other companions?" asked Augustus.

"Only Harry Cook,* and a very singular woman——"

Here Ned's narrative was interrupted by a dark defile through a wood, allowing room for only one horseman at a time. They continued this gloomy path for several minutes, until at length it brought them to the brink of a large dell, overgrown with bushes and spreading around, somewhat in the form of a rude semicircle. Here the robbers dismounted, and led their reeking horses down the descent. Long Ned, who went first, paused at a cluster of bushes, which seemed so thick as to defy intrusion, but which, yielding, on either side, to the experienced hand of the robber, presented what appeared the mouth of a cavern. A few steps along the passage of this gulf brought them to a door, which, even seen by torchlight, would have appeared so exactly similar in colour and material to the rude walls on either side, as to have deceived any unsuspecting eye, and which, in the customary darkness brooding over it, might have remained for centuries undiscovered. Touching a secret latch, the door opened, and the robbers were in the secure precincts of the "Red Cave!" It may be remembered, that, among the early studies of our exemplary hero, the memoirs of Richard Turpin had formed a conspicuous portion; and it may also be remembered, that, in the mis-

* A noted highwayman.

cellaneous adventures of that gentleman, nothing had more delighted the juvenile imagination of the student, than the description of the forest cave, in which the gallant Turpin had been accustomed to conceal himself, his friend, his horse,

"And that sweet saint who lay by Turpin's side;"

or, to speak more domestically, the respectable Mrs. Turpin. So strong a hold, indeed, had that early reminiscence fixed upon our hero's mind, that, no sooner had he risen to eminence among his friends, than he had put the project of his childhood into execution. He had selected for the scene of his ingenuity an admirable spot. In a thinly-peopled country, surrounded by commons and woods, and yet (as Mr. Robins would say, if he had to dispose of it by auction) "within an easy ride" of populous and well-frequented roads, it possessed all the advantages of secrecy for itself, and convenience for depredation. Very few of the gang, and those only who had been employed in its construction, were made acquainted with the secret of this cavern; and as our adventurers rarely visited it, and only on occasions of urgent want, or secure concealment, it had continued for more than two years undiscovered and unsuspected.

The cavern, originally hollowed by nature, owed but little to the decorations of art; nevertheless, the roughness of the walls was concealed by a rude but comfortable arras of matting: four or five of such seats as the robbers themselves could construct, were drawn around a small but bright wood-fire, which, as there was no chimney, spread a thin volume of smoke over the apartment. The height of the cave, added to the universal reconciler—custom, prevented, however, this evil from being seriously unpleasant; and, indeed, like the tenants of an Irish cabin, perhaps the inmates attached a degree of comfort to a circumstance which was coupled with their dearest household associations. A table, formed of a board coarsely planed, and supported by four legs of irregular size, made equal by the introduction of blocks or wedges between the legs and the floor, stood warming its uncouth self by the fire. At one corner, a covered cart made a conspicuous article of furniture, no doubt useful either in conveying plunder or provisions, beside the wheels were carelessly thrown two or three coarse

carpenter's tools, and the more warlike utilities of a blunderbuss, a rifle, and two broadswords. In the other corner was an open cupboard, containing rows of pewter platters, mugs, &c. Opposite the fireplace, which was to the left of the entrance, an excavation had been turned into a dormitory, and fronting the entrance was a pair of broad, strong, wooden steps, ascending to a large hollow about eight feet from the ground. This was the entrance to the stables; and as soon as their owners released the reins of the horses, the docile animals proceeded one by one leisurely up the steps, in the manner of quadrupeds educated at the public seminary of Astley's, and disappeared within the aperture.

These steps, when drawn up, which, however, from their extreme clumsiness, required the united strength of two ordinary men, and was not that instantaneous work which it should have been, made the place above a tolerably strong hold, for the wall was perfectly perpendicular and level, and it was only by placing his hands upon the ledge, and so lifting himself gymnastically upward, that an active assailant could have reached the eminence; a work which defenders equally active, it may easily be supposed, would not be likely to allow.

This upper cave—for our robbers paid more attention to their horses than themselves, as the nobler animals of the two species,—was evidently fitted up with some labour. The stalls were rudely divided, the litter of dry fern was clean, troughs were filled with oats, and a large tub had been supplied from a pond at a little distance. A cart-harness, and some old wagoners' frocks were fixed on pegs to the wall. While at the far end of these singular stables was a door strongly barred, and only just large enough to admit the body of a man. The confederates had made it an express law never to enter their domain by this door, or to use it, except for the purpose of escape, should the cave ever be attacked; in which case, while one or two defended the entrance from the inner cave, another might unbar the door, and as it opened upon the thickest part of the wood, through which with great ingenuity a labyrinthine path had been cut, not easily tracked by ignorant pursuers, these precautions of the highwaymen had provided a fair hope of at least a temporary escape from any invading enemies.

Such were the domestic arrangements of the Red Cave; and it will be conceded that, at least, some skill

had been shown in the choice of the spot, if there were a lack of taste in its adornments.

While the horses were performing their nightly ascent, our three heroes, after securing the door, made at once to the fire. And there, O reader, they were greeted in welcome by one,—an old and revered acquaintance of thine,—whom in such a scene it will equally astound, and wound thee to re-behold.

Know then,—but first we will describe to thee the occupation and the garb of the august personage to whom we allude. Bending over a large gridiron, daintily bespread with steaks of the fattest rump, the INDIVIDUAL stood ;—with his right arm bared above the elbow, and his right hand grasping that mimic trident known unto gastronomers by the monosyllable “fork.” His wigless head was adorned with a cotton nightcap. His upper vestment was discarded, and a whitish apron flowed gracefully down his middle man. His stockings were ungartered, and permitted, between the knee and the calf, interesting glances of the rude carnal. One list shoe and one of leathern manufacture cased his ample feet. Enterprise, or the noble glow of his present culinary profession, spread a yet rosier blush over a countenance early tinged by generous libations, and from beneath the curtain of his pallid eyelashes, his large and rotund orbs gleamed dazingly on the new comers. Such, O reader, was the aspect and the occupation of the venerable man whom we have long since taught thee to admire, such—alas for the mutabilities of earth !—was—a new chapter only can contain the name.

CHAPTER IX.

Caliban. Hast thou not dropped from Heaven :

TEMPEST.

PETER MACGRAWLER !

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

CHAPTER X.

God Bless our King and Parliament,
 And send he may make such knaves repent.
Loyal Songs against the Rump Parliament.
 Ho, treachery ! my guards, my scimitar !
 BYRON.

WHEN the irreverent Mr. Pepper had warmed his hands sufficiently to be able to transfer them from the fire, he lifted the right palm, and with an indecent jocularity of spirits, accosted the *ci-devant* ornament of the Asinæum, with a sounding slap on his back—or some such part of his conformation.

"Ah, old boy!" said he, "is this the way you keep house for us? A fire not large enough to roast a nit, and supper too small to fatten him beforehand! But how the deuse should you know how to provender for gentlemen? you thought you were in Scotland, I'll be bound!"

"Perhaps he did, when he looked upon you, Ned!" said Tomlinson, gravely; "'t is but rarely out of Scotland that a man can see so big a rogue in so little a compass!"

Mr. MacGrawler, into whose eyes the palmistry of Long Ned had brought tears of sincere feeling, and who had hitherto been rubbing the afflicted part, now grumbled forth—

"You may say what you please, Mr. Pepper,—but it is not often in my country, that men of genius are seen performing the part of cooks to robbers!"

"No!" quoth Tomlinson, "they are performing the more profitable part, of robbers to cooks, eh!"

"Damme, you're out," cried Long Ned, "for, in that country, there are either no robbers, because there is nothing to rob; or the inhabitants are all robbers, who have plundered one another, and made away with the booty!"

"May the de'il catch thee," said MacGrawler, stung to the quick,—for, like all Scots, he was a patriot;—much on the same principle as a woman who has the worst children makes the best mother.

"The de'il!" said Ned, mimicking the "silver sound," as Sir W. Scott has been pleased facetiously to call the

"mountain tongue,"—the Scots in general seem to think it is silver, they keep it so carefully.—"The de'il, *Mac-Deil*, you mean,—sure the gentleman must have been a Scotchman!"

The sage grinned in spite; but remembering the patience of Epictetus when a slave, and mindful also of the strong arm of Long Ned, he curbed his temper, and turned the beefsteaks with his fork.

"Well, Ned," said Augustus, throwing himself into a chair, which he drew to the fire, while he gently patted the huge limbs of Mr. Pepper, as if to admonish him that they were not so transparent as glass—"let us look at the fire; and, by-the-by, it is your turn to see to the horses."

"Plague on it!" cried Ned, "it is always my turn, I think.—Hollo, you Scot of the pot, can't you prove that I groomed the beasts last? I'll give you a crown to do it."

The wise MacGrawler pricked up his ears.

"A crown!" said he,—a crown! do you mean to insult me, Mr. Pepper? but, to be sure, you did see to the horses last, and this worthy gentleman, Mr. Tomlinson, must remember it too."

"How, I?" cried Augustus; "you are mistaken, and I'll give you half a guinea to prove it."

MacGrawler opened his eyes larger and larger, as you may see a small circle in the water widen into enormity.

"Half a guinea!" said he; "nay, nay, you joke; I'm not mercenary, you think I am! pooh, pooh! you're mistaken; I'm a man who means *weel*, a man of veracity, and will speak the truth in spite of all the half-guineas in the world. But certainly, now I begin to think of it, Mr. Tomlinson did see to the creatures last,—and, Mr. Pepper, it is your turn."

"A very Daniel!" said Tomlinson, chuckling in his usual dry manner.—"Ned, don't you hear the horses neigh?"

"Oh, hang the horses!" said the volatile Pepper, forgetting every thing else, as he thrust his hands in his pockets, and felt the gains of the night; "let us first look to our winnings!"

So saying, he marched towards the table, and emptied his pockets thereon: Tomlinson, nothing loath, followed the example. Heavens! what exclamations of delight issued from the scoundrels' lips, as, one by one, they inspected their new acquisitions.

"Here's a magnificent creature!" cried Ned, handling that superb watch studded with jewels, which the poor Earl had once before unavailingly redeemed; "a repeater, by Jove!"

"I hope not," said the phlegmatic Augustus; "repeaters would not tell well for your conversation, Ned!—But powers that be! look at this ring, a diamond of the first water!"

"Oh the sparkler! it makes one's mouth water as much as itself. 'Sdeath, here's a precious box for a sneezer! a picture inside, and rubies outside. The old fellow had excellent taste! it would charm him to see how pleased we are with his choice of jewelry!"

"Talking of jewelry," said Tomlinson, "I had almost forgotten the morocco case; between you and me, I imagine we have a prize there; it looks like a jewel casket!"

So saying, the robber opened that case, which on many a gala day had lent lustre to the polished person of Mauleverer. O reader, the burst of rapture that ensued! imagine it! we cannot express it! Like the Grecian painter, we drop a veil over emotions too deep for words.

"But here," said Pepper, when they had almost exhausted their transports at sight of the diamonds, "here's the purse—fifty guineas! and what's this? notes, by Jupiter! we must change them to-morrow, before they are stopped. Curse those fellows, they are always imitating us; we stop their money, and they don't lose a moment in stopping it too. Three hundred pounds! Captain, what say you to our luck?"

Clifford had sat gloomily looking on, during the operations of the robbers; he now, assuming a correspondent cheerfulness of manner, made a suitable reply, and after some general conversation, the work of division took place.

"We are the best arithmeticians in the world!" said Augustus, as he pouched his share: "addition, subtraction, division, reduction,—we have them all as pat as the Tutor's Assistant; and, what is better, we make them all applicable to the *Rule of Three*."

"You have left out multiplication!" said Clifford, smiling.

"Ah! because that works differently; the other rules apply to the species of the kingdom; but as for multiplication, we multiply, I fear, no species but our own!"

"Fie, gentlemen!" said MacGrawler, austerely,—for there is a wonderful decorum in your true Scotsmen. "Actions are trifles; nothing can be cleaner than their words!"

"Oh, you thrust in *your* wisdom, do you?" said Ned. "I suppose you want your part of the booty!"

"Part," said the subtilizing Tomlinson. "He has nine times as many parts as we have already. Is he not a critic, and has he not the parts of speech at his fingers' end?"

"Nonsense!" said MacGrawler, instinctively holding out his hands, with the fork dropping between the stretched fingers of the right palm.

"Nonsense yourself!" cried Ned, "*you* have a share in what you never took! a pretty fellow, truly! Mind your business, Mr. Scot, and fork nothing but the beef-steaks!"

With this Ned turned to the stables, and soon disappeared among the horses; but Clifford, eyeing the disappointed and eager face of the culinary sage, took ten guineas from his own share, and pushed them towards his quondam tutor.

"There!" said he, emphatically.

"Nay, nay," grunted MacGrawler; "I don't want the money, it is my way to scorn such dross!" So saying, he pocketed the coins, and turned, muttering to himself, to the renewal of his festive preparations.

Meanwhile, a whispered conversation took place between Augustus and the Captain, and continued till Ned returned,

"And the night's viands smoked along the board!"

Souls of Don Raphael and Ambrose Lamela, what a charming thing it is to be a rogue for a little time! How merry men are when they have cheated their brethren! Your innocent milksops never made so jolly a supper as did our heroes of the way. Clifford, perhaps, acted a part, but the hilarity of his comrades was unfeigned. It was a delicious contrast, the boisterous "Ha, ha!" of Long Ned, and the secret, dry, calculating chuckle of Augustus Tomlinson. It was Rabelais against Voltaire. They united only in the objects of their jests, and foremost of those objects—(wisdom is ever the butt of the frivolous)—was the great Peter MacGrawler.

The graceless dogs were especially merry upon the subject of the sage's former occupation.

"Come, Mac, you carve this ham," said Ned; "you have had practice in cutting up."

The learned man whose name was thus disrespectfully abbreviated proceeded to perform what he was bid. He was about to sit down for that purpose, when Tomlinson slyly subtracted his chair,—the sage fell.

"No jests at MacGrawler," said the malicious Augustus; "whatever be his faults as a critic, you see that he is well grounded, and he gets at once to the bottom of a subject.—Mac, suppose your next work be entitled, 'a tail of wo!'"

Men who have great minds are rarely flexible; they do not take a jest readily; so it was with MacGrawler. He rose in a violent rage, and had the robbers been more penetrating than they condescended to be, they might have noticed something dangerous in his eye. As it was, Clifford, who had often before been the protector of his tutor, interposed in his behalf, drew the sage a seat near to himself, and filled his plate for him. It was interesting to see this deference from Power to Learning! It was Alexander doing homage to Aristotle!

"There is only one thing I regret," cried Ned, with his mouth full, "about the old lord,—it was a thousand pities we did not make him dance! I remember the day, Captain, when you would have insisted on it. What a merry fellow you were once! Do you recollect, one bright moonlight night, just like the present, for instance, when we were doing duty near Staines, how you swore every person we stopped, above fifty years old, should dance a minuet with you?"

"Ay!" added Augustus, "and the first was a Bishop in a white wig. Faith, how stiffly his Lordship jigged it! And how gravely Lovett bowed to him, with his hat off, when it was all over, and returned him his watch and ten guineas,—it was worth the sacrifice!"

"And the next was an old maid of quality," said Ned, "as lean as a lawyer.—Do n't you remember how she curveted?"

"To be sure," said Tomlinson, "and you very wittily called her a *hop-pole*!"

"How delighted she was with the Captain's suavity! When he gave her back her earrings, and *agrette*, she

bade him with a tender sigh keep them for her sake,—
ha! ha!"

"And the third was a beau!" cried Augustus, "and Lovett surrendered his right of partnership to me. Do you recollect how I danced his beauship into the ditch? —ah! we were mad fellows then; but we get sated, *blasé*, as the French say, as we grow older!"

"We look only to the main chance now!" said Ned.

"Avarice supersedes enterprise," added the sententious Augustus.

"And our Captain takes to wine with an *h* after the *w*!" continued the metaphorical Ned.

"Come, we are melancholy," said Tomlinson, tossing off a bumper. "Methinks we are *really* growing old: we shall repent soon, and the next step will be—hanging!"

"Fore Gad!" said Ned, helping himself, "do n't be so croaking. There are two classes of maligned gentry, who should always be particular to avoid certain colours in dressing: I hate to see a true boy in black, or a devil in blue. But here's my last glass to-night! I am soundly sleepy, and we rise early to-morrow."

"Right, Ned," said Tomlinson; "give us a song before you retire, and let it be that one which Lovett composed the last time we were here."

Ned, always pleased with an opportunity of displaying himself, cleared his voice and complied.

A DITTY FROM SHERWOOD.

I.

Laugh with us at the prince and the palace
In the wild wood life there is better cheer;
Would you hoard your mirth from your neighbour's malice,
Gather it up in our garners here.
Some kings their wealth from their subjects wring,
While by their foes they the poorer wax;
Free go the men of the wise wood-king,
And it is only our foes we tax.
Leave the cheats of trade to the shrewd gude-wife:
Let the old be knaves at ease;
Away with the tide of that dashing life
Which is stirred by a constant breeze!

II.

Laugh with us when you hear deceiving
And solemn rogues tell you what knaves we be;
Commerce and law have a method of thieving
Worse than a stand at the outlaw's tree,
Say, will the maiden we love despise
Gallants at least to each other true?

I grant that we trample on legal ties,
 But I have heard that Love scorns them too.
 Courage then, courage, ye jolly boys,
 Whom the fool with the knavish rates;
 Oh! who that is loved by the world enjoys
 Half as much as the man it hates!

"Bravissimo! Ned," cried Tomlinson, rapping the table—"bravissimo! your voice is superb to-night, and your song admirable. Really, Lovett, it does your poetical genius great credit; quite philosophical, upon my honour."

"Bravissimo!" said MacGrawler, nodding his head awfully. "Mr. Pepper's voice is as sweet as a bagpipe!—Ah! such a song would have been invaluable to the Asinæum, when I had the honour to—"

"Be Vicar of *Bray* to that establishment," interrupted Tomlinson. "Pray, MacGrawler, why do they call Edinburgh the modern Athens?"

"Because of the learned and great men it produces," returned MacGrawler, with conscious pride.

"Pooh! pooh!—you are thinking of *ancient* Athens. Your city is called the *modern* Athens, because you are all so like the modern Athenians,—the damnedst scoundrels imaginable, unless travellers belie them."

"Nay," interrupted Ned, who was softened by the applause of the critic, "Mac is a good fellow, spare him. Gentlemen, your health. I am going to bed, and I suppose you will not tarry long behind me."

"Trust us for that," answered Tomlinson; "the Captain and I will consult on the business of the morrow, and join you in the twinkling of a bedpost, as it has been shrewdly expressed."

Ned yawned his last "good night," and disappeared within the dormitory. MacGrawler, yawning also, but with a graver yawn, as became his wisdom, betook himself to the duty of removing the supper paraphernalia: after bustling soberly about for some minutes, he let down a press-bed in the corner of the cave (for he did not sleep in the robbers' apartment), and undressing himself, soon appeared buried in the bosom of Morpheus. But the chief and Tomlinson, drawing their seats nearer to the dying embers, defied the slothful god, and entered with low tones into a close and anxious commune.

"So then," said Augustus, "now that you have realized sufficient funds for your purpose, you will really desert us,—have you well weighed the *pros* and *cons*?"

Remember, that nothing is so dangerous to our state as reform; the moment a man grows honest, the gang forsake him; the magistrate misses his fee; the informer peaches; and the recusant hangs."

"I have well weighed all this," answered Clifford, "and have decided on my course. I have only tarried till my means could assist my will. With my share of our present and late booty, I shall betake myself to the Continent. Prussia gives easy trust, and ready promotion, to all who will enlist in her service. But this language, my dear friend, seems strange from your lips. Surely you will join me in my separation from the *corps*? What! you shake your head! Are you not the same Tomlinson who at Bath agreed with me, that we were in danger from the envy of our comrades, and that retreat had become necessary to our safety? Nay, was not this your main argument for our matrimonial expedition?"

"Why, look you, dear Lovett," said Augustus, "we are all blocks of matter, formed from the atoms of custom;—in other words, we are a mechanism, to which habit is the spring. What could I do in an honest career? I am many years older than you. I have lived as a rogue, till I have no other nature than roguery. I doubt if I should not be a coward were I to turn soldier. I am sure I should be the most consummate of rascals were I to affect to be honest. No: I mistook myself when I talked of separation. I must e'en jog on with my old comrades, and in my old ways, till I jog into the noose hempen—or, melancholy alternative, the noose matrimonial!"

"This is mere folly," said Clifford, from whose nervous and masculine mind habits were easily shaken. "We have not for so many years discarded all the servile laws of others, to be the abject slaves of our own weaknesses. Come, my dear fellow, rouse yourself. God knows, were I to succumb to the feebleness of my own heart, I should be lost indeed. And perhaps, wrestle I ever so stoutly, I do not wrestle away that which clings within me, and will kill me, though by inches. But let us not be cravens, and suffer fate to drown us rather than swim. In a word, fly with me ere it be too late. A smuggler's vessel waits me off the coast of Dorset: in three days from this, I sail. Be my companion. We can both rein a fiery horse, and wield a good sword. As

long as men make war one against another, those accomplishments will prevent their owner from starving, or—”

“If employed in the field, not the road,” interrupted Tomlinson, with a smile,—“from hanging.—But it cannot be! I wish you all joy, all success in your career: you are young, bold, and able; and you always had a loftier spirit than I have!—Knave I am, and knave I must be to the end of the chapter!”

“As you will,” said Clifford, who was not a man of many words, but he spoke with reluctance: “if so, I must seek my fortune alone.”

“When do you leave us?” asked Tomlinson.

“To-morrow, before noon. I shall visit London for a few hours, and then start at once for the coast!”

“London!” exclaimed Tomlinson: “what, the very den of danger!—Pooh! you do not know what you say; or, do you think it filial to caress Mother Lobkins before you depart?”

“Not that,” answered Clifford; “I have already ascertained that she is above the reach of all want, and her days, poor soul! cannot, I fear, be many. In all probability, she would scarcely recognise me; for her habits cannot much have improved her memory. Would I could say as much for her neighbours! Were I to be seen in the purlieus of low thievery, you know, as well as I do, that some stealer of kerchiefs would turn informer against the notorious Captain Lovett.”

“What, then, takes you to town? Ah!—you turn away your face;—I guess!—Well, love has ruined many a hero before; may you not be the worse for his godship!”

Clifford did not answer, and the conversation made a sudden and long pause; Tomlinson broke it:—

“Do you know, Lovett,” said he, “though I have as little heart as most men, yet I feel for you more than I could have thought it possible; I would fain join you; there is devilish good tobacco in Germany, I believe; and, after all, there is not so much difference between the life of a thief and of a soldier!”

“Do profit by so sensible a remark,” said Clifford; “reflect, how certain of destruction is the path you now tread: the gallows and the hulks are the only goals!”

“The prospects are not pleasing, I allow,” said Tomlinson; “nor is it desirable to be preserved for another

century in the immortality of a glass case, in Surgeons' Hall, grinning from ear to ear, as if one had made the merriest finale imaginable.—Well! I will sleep on it, and you shall have my answer to-morrow;—but poor Ned!"

"Would he not join us?"

"Certainly not: his neck is made for a rope, and his mind for the Old Bailey. There is no hope for him; yet he is an excellent fellow. We must not even tell him of our meditated desertion."

"By no means. I shall leave a letter to our London chief: it will explain all. And now to bed;—I look to your companionship as settled."

"Humph!" said Augustus Tomlinson.

So ended the conference of the robbers. About an hour after it had ceased, and when no sound save the heavy breath of Long Ned broke the stillness of the night, the intelligent countenance of Peter MacGrawler slowly elevated itself from the lonely pillow on which it had reclined. By degrees, the back of the sage stiffened into perpendicularity, and he sat for a few moments erect on his seat of honour, apparently in listening deliberation. Satisfied with the deep silence that, save the solitary interruption we have specified, reigned around, the learned disciple of Vatel rose gently from the bed,—hurried on his clothes,—stole on tiptoe to the door,—unbarred it with a noiseless hand,—and vanished. Sweet reader, while thou art wondering at his absence, suppose we account for his appearance.

One evening, Clifford and his companion Augustus had been enjoying the rational amusement of Ranelagh, and were just leaving that celebrated place, when they were arrested by a crowd at the entrance. That crowd was assembled round a pickpocket; and that pickpocket—O Virtue!—O Wisdom!—O Asinaum!—was Peter MacGrawler! We have before said, that Clifford was possessed of a good mien and an imposing manner, and these advantages were at that time especially effectual in preserving our Orbilius from the pump. No sooner did Clifford recognise the magisterial face of the sapient Scot, than he boldly thrust himself into the middle of the crowd, and, collaring the enterprising citizen who had collared MacGrawler, declared *himself* ready to vouch for the honesty of the very respectable person whose identity had evidently been so grossly mistaken. Au-

gustus, probably foreseeing some ingenious *ruse* of his companions, instantly seconded the defence. The mob, who never descry any difference between impudence and truth, gave way; a constable came up—took part with the friend of two gentlemen so unexceptionably dressed—our friends walked off—the crowd repented of their precipitation, and, by way of amends, ducked the gentleman whose pockets had been picked. It was in vain for him to defend himself, for he had an impediment in his speech; and Messieurs the mob, having ducked him once for his guilt, ducked him a second time for his embarrassment.

In the interim, Clifford had withdrawn his quondam Mentor to the asylum of a coffee-house; and while MacGrawler's soul expanded itself by wine, he narrated the causes of his dilemma. It seems that the incomparable journal the *Asinæum*, despite a series of most popular articles upon the writings of "Aulus Prudentius," to which were added an exquisite string of dialogues, written in a tone of broad humour,—viz. broad Scotch (with Scotchmen it is all the same thing), called—perhaps in remembrance of that illustrious knave, Ambrose Lamela—"Noctes Ambrosiana;" despite of these invaluable miscellanies, to say nothing of some glorious political articles, in which it was clearly proved to the satisfaction of the rich, that the less poor devils eat, the better for their constitutions—despite, we say, of these great acquisitions to British literature, the *Asinæum* tottered, fell, buried its bookseller, and crushed its author; MacGrawler only—escaping, like Theodore, from the enormous helmet of Otranto—MacGrawler only survived. "Love," says Sir Philip Sidney, "makes a man see better than a pair of spectacles." Love of life has a very different effect on the optics,—it makes a man woefully dim of inspection, and sometimes causes him to see his own property in another man's purse! This *deceptive visus* did it impose upon Peter MacGrawler. He went to Ranelagh. Reader, thou knowest the rest!

Wine and the ingenuity of the robbers having extorted this narrative from MacGrawler, the barriers of superfluous delicacy were easily done away with.

Our heroes offered to the sage an introduction to their club; the offer was accepted; and MacGrawler, having been first made drunk, was next made a robber. The gang engaged him in various little matters, in which we

grieve to relate, that though his intentions were excellent, his success was so ill as thoroughly to enrage his employers: nay, they were about at one time, when they wanted to propitiate justice, to hand him over to the secular power, when Clifford interposed in his behalf. From a robber, the sage dwindled into a drudge; menial offices (the robbers, the lying rascals, declared that such offices were best fitted to the genius of his country!) succeeded to noble exploits, and the worst of robbers became the best of cooks. How vain is all wisdom, but that of long experience! Though Clifford was a sensible and keen man,—though he knew our sage to be a knave, he never dreamed he could be a traitor. He thought him too indolent to be malicious, and, shortsighted humanity! too silly to be dangerous. He trusted the sage with the secret of the cavern; and Augustus, who was a bit of an epicure, submitted, though forebodingly, to the choice, because of the Scotchman's skill in broiling.

But MacGrawler, like Brutus, concealed a scheming heart, under a stolid guise; the apprehension of the noted Lovett had become a matter of serious desire; the police was no longer to be bribed: nay, they were now eager to bribe;—MacGrawler had watched his time—sold his chief, and was now on the road to Reading, to meet and to guide to the cavern Mr. Nabbem, of Bowstreet, and four of his attendants.

Having thus, as rapidly as we were able, traced the causes which brought so startlingly before your notice the most incomparable of critics, we now, reader, return to our robbers.

"Hist, Lovett!" said Tomlinson, half asleep, "methought I heard something in the outer cave."

"It is the Scot, I suppose," answered Clifford: "you saw of course to the door?"

"To be 'sure!" muttered Tomlinson, and in two minutes more he was asleep.

Not so Clifford: many and anxious thoughts kept him waking. At one while, when he anticipated the opening to a new career, somewhat of the stirring and high spirit which still moved amid the guilty and confused habits of his mind, made his pulse feverish, and his limbs restless: at another time, an agonizing remembrance—the remembrance of Lucy in all her charms, her beauty, her love, her tender and innocent heart; Lucy, all perfect, and lost to him for ever, banished every other

reflection, and only left him the sick sensation of despondency and despair. "What avails my struggle for a better name?" he thought. "*She* will never know it. Whatever my future lot, *she* can never share it. My punishment is fixed,—it is worse than a death of shame; it is a life without hope! Every moment I feel, and shall feel to the last, the pressure of a chain that may never be broken or loosened! And yet, fool that I am! I cannot leave this country without seeing her again, without telling her, that I have *really* looked my last. But have I not *twice* told her that? Strange fatality! but twice have I spoken to her of love, and each time it was to tear myself from her at the moment of my confession. And even now something that I have no power to resist, compels me to the same idle and weak indulgence. Does destiny urge me? Ay, perhaps to my destruction! Every hour a thousand deaths encompass me. I have now obtained all for which I seemed to linger. I have won, by a new crime, enough to bear me to another land, and to provide me there a soldier's destiny. I should not lose an hour in flight, yet I rush into the nest of my enemies, only for one unavailing word with her; and this too after I have already bade her farewell! *Is* this fate? if it be so, what matters it? I no longer care for a life, which after all I should reform in vain, if I could not reform it for her: yet—yet, selfish and lost that I am! will it be nothing to think hereafter that I have redeemed her from the disgrace of having loved an outcast and a felon?—If I can obtain honour, will it not, in my own heart at least—will it not reflect, however dimly and distantly, upon her?"

Such, bewildered, unsatisfactory, yet still steeped in the colours of that true love which raises even the lowest, were the midnight meditations of Clifford: they terminated towards the morning, in an uneasy and fitful slumber. From this he was awakened by a loud yawn from the throat of Long Ned, who was always the earliest riser of his set.

"Hollo!" said he, "it is almost daybreak; and if we want to cash our notes, and to move the old lord's jewels, we should already be on the start."

"A plague on you!" said Tomlinson, from under cover of his woollen nightcap, "it was but this instant that I was dreaming you were going to be hanged, and now you wake me in the pleasantest part of the dream!"

"You be shot?" said Ned, turning one leg out of bed; "by-the-by, you took more than your share last night, for you owed me three guineas for our last game at cribbage! You'll please to pay me before we part to-day: short accounts make long friends!"

"However true that maxim be," returned Tomlinson, "I know one much truer, namely—long friends will make short accounts! You must ask Jack Ketch this day month, if I'm wrong!"

"That's what *you* call wit, I suppose!" retorted Ned, as he now, struggling into his inexpressibles, felt his way into the outer cave.

"What, ho! Mac!" cried he, as he went, "stir those bobbins of thine, which thou art pleased to call legs;—strike a light, and be d——d to you!"

"A light for *you*," said Tomlinson, profanely, as he reluctantly left his couch, "will indeed be a light to lighten the Gentiles!"

"Why, Mac—Mac!" shouted Ned, "why don't you answer!—faith, I think the Scot's dead!"

"Seize your men!—yield, sirs!" cried a stern, sudden voice from the gloom; and at that instant two dark lanterns were turned, and their light streamed full upon the astounded forms of Tomlinson and his gaunt comrade! In the dark shade of the background four or five forms were also indistinctly visible; and the ray of the lanterns glimmered on the blades of cutlasses and the barrels of weapons still less easily resisted.

Tomlinson was the first to recover his self-possession. The light just gleamed upon the first step of the stairs leading to the stables, leaving the rest in shadow. He made one stride to the place beside the cart, where, we have said, lay some of the robbers' weapons: he had been anticipated—the weapons were gone. The next moment Tomlinson had sprung up the steps.

"Lovett!—Lovett!—Lovett!" shouted he.

The captain, who had followed his comrades into the cavern, was already in the grasp of two men. From few ordinary mortals, however, could any two be selected as fearful odds against such a man as Clifford; a man in whom a much larger share of sinews and muscle than is usually the lot even of the strong, had been hardened, by perpetual exercise, into a consistency and iron firmness which linked power and activity into a union scarcely less remarkable than that immortalized in the

glorious beauty of the sculptured gladiator. His right hand is upon the throat of one assailant, his left locks, as in a vice, the wrist of the other: you have scarcely time to breathe; the former is on the ground—the pistol of the latter is wrenched from his gripe—Clifford is on the step—a ball—another—whizzes by him!—he is by the side of the faithful Augustus!

“Open the secret door!” whispered Clifford to his friend; “I will draw up the steps alone!”

Scarcely had he spoken, before the steps were already, but slowly, ascending beneath the desperate strength of the robber. Meanwhile, Ned was struggling, as he best might, with two sturdy officers, who appeared loath to use their weapons without an absolute necessity, and who endeavoured, by main strength, to capture and detain their antagonist.

“Look well to the door!” cried the voice of the principal officer, “and hang out more light!”

Two or three additional lanterns were speedily brought forward; and over the whole interior of the cavern—a dim but sufficient light now rapidly circled, giving to the scene, and to the combatants, a picturesque and wild appearance!

The quick eye of the head-officer descried in an instant the rise of the steps, and the advantage the robbers were thereby acquiring. He and two of his men threw themselves forward, seized the ladder, if so it may be called, dragged it once more to the ground, and ascended. But Clifford, grasping with both hands the broken shaft of a cart that lay in reach, received the foremost invader with a salute that sent him prostrate and senseless back among his companions. The second shared the same fate; and the stout leader of the enemy, who, like a true general, had kept himself in the rear, paused now in the middle of the steps, dismayed alike by the reception of his friends, and the athletic form towering above, with raised weapon and menacing attitude. Perhaps that moment seemed to the judicious Mr. Nabber more favourable to parley than to conflict. He cleared his throat, and thus addressed the foe:

“You, sir, Captain Lovett, alias Howard, alias Jackson, alias Cavendish, alias Solomons, alias Devil, for I know you well, and could swear to you with half an eye, in your clothes or without; you lay down your club there, and let me come alongside of you, and you’ll find

me as gentle as a lamb; for I've been used to gemmen all my life, and I knows how to treat 'em when I has 'em!"

"But, if I will not let you 'come alongside of me,'—what then?"

"Why, I must send one of these here pops through your skull, that 's all!"

"Nay, Mr. Nabbem, that would be too cruel; you surely would not harm one who has such an esteem for you? Do n't you remember the manner in which I brought you off from Justice Burnflat, when you were accused, you know whether justly or——"

"You're a liar, Captain!" cried Nabbem, furiously, fearful that something not meet for the ears of his companions should transpire. "You knows you are! Come down, or let me mount, otherwise I won't be 'sponsible for the consequences!"

Clifford cast a look over his shoulder. A gleam of the gray daylight already glimmered through a chink in the secret door, which Tomlinson had now unbarred, and was about to open.

"Listen to me, Mr. Nabbem," said he, "and perhaps I may grant what you require! What would you do with me if you had me?"

"You speaks like a sinsible man, now," answered Nabbem, "and that 's after my own heart. Why, you sees, Captain, your time has come, and you can't shilly-shally any longer. You have had your full swing; your years are up, and you must die like a man! But I gives you my honour as a gemman, that if you surrenders, I'll take you to the justice folks as tenderly as if you were made of cotton."

"Give way one moment," said Clifford, "that I may plant the steps firmer for you."

Nabbem retreated to the ground, and Clifford, who had, good-naturedly enough, been unwilling unnecessarily to damage so valuable a functionary, lost not the opportunity now afforded him. Down thundered the steps, clattering heavily among the other officers, and falling like an avalanche on the shoulder of one of the arresters of Long Ned.

Meanwhile, Clifford sprang after Tomlinson through the aperture, and found himself—in the presence of four officers, conducted by the shrewd MacGrawler. A blow from a budgeon on the right cheek and temple of

Augustus felled that hero. But Clifford bounded over his comrade's body, dodged from the stroke aimed at himself, caught the blow aimed by another assailant in his open hand, wrested the bludgeon from the officer, struck him to the ground with his own weapon, and darting onward through the labyrinth of the wood commenced his escape with a step too fleet to allow the hope of a successful pursuit.

CHAPTER XI.

"In short, Isabella, I offer you myself!"

"Heavens!" cried Isabella, "what do I hear? Yo. my Lord?"

CASTLE OF OTRANTO.

A NOVEL is like a weatherglass, where the man appears out at one time, the woman at another. Variable as the atmosphere, the changes of our story now re-present Lucy to the reader.

That charming young person,—who, it may be remarked, is (her father excepted) the only unsophisticated and unsullied character in the pages of a story in some measure designed to show in the depravities of character the depravities of that social state wherein characters are formed,—was sitting alone in her apartment at the period in which we return to her. As Time, and that innate and insensible fund of *healing*, which Nature has placed in the bosoms of the young, in order that her great law, the passing away of the old, may not leave too lasting and keen a wound, had softened her first anguish at her father's death, the remembrance of Clifford again resumed its ancient sway in her heart. The loneliness of her life,—the absence of amusement,—even the sensitiveness and languor which succeed to grief, conspired to invest the image of her lover in a tenderer and more impressive guise. She recalled his words, his actions, his letters, and employed herself whole hours, whole days and nights, in endeavouring to decipher their mystery. Who that has been loved will not acknowledge the singular and mighty force with which a girl, innocent herself, clings to the belief of innocence in her lover? In breasts young and unacquainted with the

world, there is so pure a credulity in the existence of unmingled good, so firm a reluctance to think that where we love, there can be that which we would not esteem, or where we admire there can be that which we ought to blame, that one may almost deem it an argument in favour of our *natural* power to attain a greater eminence in virtue, than the habits and arts of the existing world will allow us to reach. Perhaps it is not paradoxical to say that we could scarcely believe perfection in others, were not the germ of perfectibility in our own minds! When a man has lived some years among the actual contests of faction, without imbibing the prejudice as well as the experience, how wonderingly he smiles at his worship of former idols!—how different a colour does history wear to him!—how cautious is he now to praise!—how slow to admire!—how prone to cavil! Human Nature has become the human nature of art; and he estimates it not from what it may be, but from what, in the corruptions of a semi-civilization, it is! But in the same manner as the young student clings to the belief, that the sage, or the minstrel, who has enlightened his reason or chained his imagination, is in character as in genius elevated above the ordinary herd, free from the passions, the frivolities, the little meanesses, and the darkening vices which ordinary flesh is heir to, does a woman, who loves for the first time, cling to the imagined excellence of him she loves! When Evelina is so shocked at the idea of an occasional fit of intoxication in her “noble, her unrivalled” lover, who does not acknowledge how natural were her feelings! Had Evelina been married six years, and the same lover, *then her husband*, been really guilty of what she suspected, who does not feel that it would have been very unnatural to have been shocked in the least at the occurrence! She would not have loved him less, nor admired him less, nor would he have been the less “the noble and the unrivalled,”—he would have taken his glass too much, have joked the next morning on the event, and the gentle Evelina would have made him a cup of tea! but that which would have been a matter of pleasantry in the husband, would have been matter of damnation in the lover!—But to return to Lucy.

If it be so hard, so repellent, to believe a lover guilty even of a trivial error, we may readily suppose that Lucy never for a moment admitted the supposition that

Clifford had been really guilty of gross error or wilful crime. True, that expressions in his letter were more than suspicious: but there is always a charm in the candour of self-condemnation. As it is difficult to believe the excellence of those who praise themselves, so is it difficult to fancy those criminal who condemn! What, too, is the process of a woman's reasoning? Alas! she is too credulous a physiognomist. The turn of a throat, with her, is the unerring token of nobleness of mind; and no one can be guilty of a sin who is blest with a beautiful forehead! How fondly, how fanatically Lucy loved! She had gathered together a precious and secret hoard;—a glove—a pen—a book—a withered rose-leaf;—treasures rendered inestimable because *he* had touched them; but more than all, she had the series of his letters, from the first formal note written to her father, meant for her, in which he answered an invitation, and requested Miss Brandon's acceptance of the music she had wished to have, to the last wild and, to her, inexplicable letter in which he had resigned her for ever. On these relics her eyes fed for hours; and as she pored over them, and over thoughts too deep not only for tears, but for all utterance or conveyance, you might have almost literally watched the fading of her rich cheek, and the pining away of her rounded and elastic form.

It was just in such a mood that she was buried, when her uncle knocked at her door for admittance: she hurried away her treasures, and hastened to admit and greet him. "I have come," said he, smiling, "to beg the pleasure of your company for an old friend who dines with us to-day.—But stay, Lucy, your hair is ill-arranged. Do not let me disturb so important an occupation as your toilette: dress yourself, my love, and join us."

Lucy turned, with a suppressed sigh, to the glass. The uncle lingered for a few moments, surveying her with mingled pride and doubt: he then slowly left the chamber.

Lucy soon afterward descended to the drawing-room, and beheld, with a little surprise (for she had not had sufficient curiosity to inquire the name of the guest), the slender form and comely features of Lord Mauleverer. The Earl approached with the same grace which had, in his earlier youth, rendered him almost irresistible, but which now, from the contrast of years

with manner, contained a *slight* mixture of the comic. He paid his compliments, and in paying them, declared that he must leave it to his friend Sir William to explain *all* the danger he had dared, for the sake of satisfying himself that Miss Brandon was no less lovely than when he had last beheld her.

"Yes, indeed," said Brandon, with a scarcely perceptible sneer, "Lord Mauleverer has literally endured the moving accidents of flood and field—for he was nearly exterminated by a highwayman, and all but drowned in a ditch!"

"Commend me to a friend for setting one off to the best advantage," said Mauleverer, gayly: "instead of attracting your sympathy, you see, Brandon would expose me to your ridicule. Judge for yourself whether I deserve it;"—and Mauleverer proceeded to give, with all the animation which belonged to his character, the particulars of that adventure with which the reader is so well acquainted. He did not, we may be sure, feel any scruple in representing himself, and his prowess, in the most favourable colours.

The story was scarcely ended when dinner was announced. During that meal, Mauleverer exerted himself to be amiable with infinite address. Suiting his conversation, more than he had hitherto deigned to do, to the temper of Lucy, and more anxious to soften than to dazzle, he certainly never before appeared to her so attractive. We are bound to add, that the point of attraction did not aspire beyond the confession, that he was a very agreeable *old man*.

Perhaps, if there had not been a certain half-melancholy vein in his conversation, possibly less painful to his Lordship from the remembrance of his lost diamonds, and the impression that Sir William Brandon's cook was considerably worse than his own, he might not have been so successful in pleasing Lucy. As for himself, all the previous impression she had made on him, returned in colours yet more vivid; even the delicate and subdued cast of beauty which had succeeded to her earlier brilliancy, was far more charming to his fastidious and courtly taste, than her former glow of spirits and health. He felt himself very much in love during dinner; and, after it was over, and Lucy had retired, he told Brandon with a passionate air, "that he *adored* his niece to distraction!"

The wily Judge affected to receive the intimation with indifference ; but knowing that too long an absence is injurious to a *grande passion*, he did not keep Mauleverer very late over his wine.

The Earl returned rapturously to the drawing-room, and besought Lucy, in a voice in which affectation seemed swooning with delight, to indulge him with a song. More and more enchanted by her assent, he drew the music-stool to the harpsichord, placed a chair beside her, and presently appeared lost in transport. Meanwhile, Brandon, with his back to the pair, covered his face with his handkerchief, and, to all appearance, yielded to the voluptuousness of an after-dinner repose.

Lucy's songbook opened accidentally at a song which had been praised by Clifford; and, as she sung, her voice took a richer and more tender tone than in Mauleverer's presence it had ever before assumed.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE VIOLETS, WHICH LOSE THEIR
SCENT IN MAY *

I.
In the shadow that falls from the silent hill
We slept, in our green retreats ;
And the April showers were wont to fill
Our hearts with sweets.

II.
And though we lay in a lowly bower,
Yet all things loved us well,
And the waking bee left her fairest flower
With us to dwell.

III.
But the warm May came in his pride to woo
The wealth of our honeyed store ;
And our hearts just felt his breath, and knew
Their sweets no more !

IV.
And the summer reigns on the quiet spot
Where we dwell, and its suns and showers
Bring balm to *our sisters'* hearts, but not—
Ah ! not to *ours*.

V.
We live, we bloom, but for ever o'er
Is the charm of the earth and sky ;
To our life, ye Heavens, that balm restore,
Or—bid us die !

As with eyes suffused with many recollections, and a

* The following stanzas have been printed in a collection of poems, by *divers hands*, called "The Casket."

voice which melted away in an indescribable and thrilling pathos, Lucy ceased her song, Mauleverer, charmed out of himself, gently took her hand, and holding the soft treasure in his own, scarcely less soft, he murmured—

“Angel! sing on. Life would be like your own music, if I could breathe it away at your feet!”

There had been a time when Lucy would have laughed outright at this declaration; and even as it was, a suppressed and half-arch smile played in the dimples of her beautiful mouth, and bewitchingly contrasted the swimming softness of her eyes.

Drawing rather an erroneous omen from the smile, Mauleverer rapturously continued, still detaining the hand which Lucy endeavoured to extricate.

“Yes, enchanting Miss Brandon, I who have for so many years boasted of my invulnerable heart, am subdued at last. I have long, very long, struggled against my attachment to you. Alas! it is in vain; and you behold me now utterly at your mercy. Make me the most miserable of men, or the most enviable. Enchantress, speak!”

“Really, my Lord,” said Lucy, hesitating, yet rising, and freeing herself from his hand, “I feel it difficult to suppose you serious; and, perhaps, this is merely a gallantry to me, by way of practice on others.”

“Sweet Lucy, if I may so call you,” answered Mauleverer, with an ardent gaze; “do not, I implore you, even for a moment, affect to mistake me! do not for a moment jest at what, to me, is the bane or bliss of life! Dare I hope that my hand and heart, which I now offer you, are not deserving of your derision?”

Lucy gazed on her adorer with a look of serious inquiry; Brandon still appeared to sleep.

“If you are in earnest, my Lord,” said Lucy, after a pause, “I am truly and deeply sorry; for the friend of my uncle, I shall always have esteem: believe that I am truly sensible of the honour you render me, when I add my regret, that I can have no other sentiment than esteem.”

A blank and puzzled bewilderment, for a moment, clouded the expressive features of Mauleverer,—it passed away.

“How sweet is your rebuke!” said he. “Yes! I do not yet deserve any other sentiment than esteem: you are not to be won precipitately; a long trial,—a long

course of attentions,—a long knowledge of my devoted and ardent love, alone will entitle me to hope for a warmer feeling in your breast. Fix then your own time of courtship, angelic Lucy!—a week,—nay, a month!—till then, I will not even press you to appoint that day, which to me will be the whitest of my life!”

“My Lord!” said Lucy, smiling now no longer half archly, “you must pardon me for believing your proposal can be nothing but a jest; but here, I beseech you, let it rest for ever: do not mention this subject to me again.”

“By Heavens!” cried Mauleverer, “this is too cruel.—Brandon, intercede for me with your niece.”

Sir William started, naturally enough, from his slumber, and Mauleverer continued—

“Yes, intercede for me; you, my oldest friend, be my greatest benefactor! I sue to your niece,—she affects to disbelieve,—will you convince her of my truth, my devotion, my worship?”

“Disbelieve you!” said the bland Judge, with the same secret sneer that usually lurked in the corners of his mouth; “I do not wonder that she is slow to credit the honour you have done her, and for which the noblest damsels in England have sighed in vain.—Lucy, will you be cruel to Lord Mauleverer? believe me, he has often confided to me his love for you; and if the experience of some years avails, there is not a question of his honour and his truth; I leave his fate in your hands.”

Brandon turned to the door.

“Stay, dear sir,” said Lucy, “and, instead of interceding for Lord Mauleverer, intercede for me.” Her look now settled into a calm and decided seriousness of expression. “I feel highly flattered by his Lordship’s proposal, which, as you say, I might well doubt to be gravely meant. I wish him all happiness with a lady of higher deserts; but I speak from an unalterable determination, when I say, that I can never accept the dignity with which he would invest me.”

So saying, Lucy walked quickly to the door and vanished, leaving the two friends to comment as they would upon her conduct.

“You have spoiled all with your precipitation,” said the uncle.

“Precipitation!—dama it! what would you have? I have been fifty years making up my mind to marry.”

and now, when I have not a day to lose, you talk of precipitation!" answered the lover, throwing himself into a *faisant*.

"But you have not been fifty years making up your mind to marry my niece," said Brandon, dryly.

"To be refused—positively refused, by a country girl," continued Mauleverer, soliloquizing aloud, "and that too at my age, and with all my experience!—a country girl without rank, *ton*, accomplishments!—By God! I do n't care if all the world heard it,—for not a soul in the world would ever believe it."

Brandon sat speechless, eyeing the mortified face of the courtier, with a malicious complacency, and there was a pause of several minutes. Sir William, then mastering the strange feeling which made him always rejoice in whatever threw ridicule on his *friend*, approached, laid his hand kindly on Mauleverer's shoulder, and talked to him of comfort and of encouragement. The reader will believe, that Mauleverer was not a man whom it was impossible to encourage.

CHAPTER XII.

Before he came, every thing loved me, and I had more things to love than I could reckon by the hairs of my head. Now, I feel I can love but one, and that one has deserted me.

* * * * *

Well, be it so—let her perish, let her be any thing but mine.

MELMOTR.

EARLY the next morning, Sir William Brandon was closeted for a long time with his niece, previous to his departure to the duties of his office. Anxious, and alarmed for the success of one of the darling projects of his ambition, he spared no art in his conversation with Lucy, that his great ingenuity of eloquence and wonderful insight into human nature could suggest, in order to gain at least a foundation for the raising of his scheme. Among other resources of his worldly tact, he hinted at Lucy's love for Clifford; and (though darkly and subtly as befitting the purity of the one he addressed) this

abandoned and wily person did not scruple to hint also at the possibility of indulging that love *after* marriage; though he denounced, as the last of indecorums, the crime of encouraging it *before*. This hint, however, fell harmless upon the innocent ear of Lucy. She did not, in the remotest degree, comprehend its meaning; she only, with a glowing cheek and a pouting lip, resented the allusion to a love which she thought it insolent in any one even to suspect.

When Brandon left the apartment, his brow was clouded, and his eye absent and thoughtful; it was evident that there had been little in the conference with his niece to please or content him. Miss Brandon herself was greatly agitated, for there was in her uncle's nature that silent and impressive secret of influencing or commanding others, which almost so invariably, and yet so quietly, attains the wishes of its owner, and Lucy, who loved and admired him sincerely, not the less perhaps for a certain modicum of fear, was greatly grieved at perceiving how rooted in him was the desire of that marriage which she felt as a moral impossibility. But if Brandon possessed the secret of sway, Lucy was scarcely less singularly endowed with the secret of resistance. It may be remembered, in describing her character, that we spoke of her as one who seemed, to the superficial, as of too yielding and soft a temper. But circumstances gave the lie to manner, and proved that she eminently possessed a quiet firmness and latent resolution, which gave to her mind a nobleness and *trust-worthy* power, that never would have been suspected, by those who met her among the ordinary paths of life.

Brandon had not been long gone, when Lucy's maid came to inform her that a gentleman, who expressed himself very desirous of seeing her, waited below. The blood rushed from Lucy's cheek at this announcement, simple as it seemed. "What gentleman *could* be desirous of seeing her? Was it—was it Clifford?" She remained for some moments motionless, and literally unable to move; at length, she summoned courage, and smiling with self-contempt at a notion which appeared to her *after* thoughts utterly absurd, she descended to the drawing-room. The first glance she directed towards the stranger, who stood by the fireplace with folded arms, was sufficient,—it was impossible to mistake, though the face was averted, the unequalled form of her

lover. She advanced eagerly with a faint cry, checked herself, and sank upon the sofa.

Clifford turned towards her, and fixed his eyes upon her countenance with an intense and melancholy gaze, but he did not utter a syllable; and Lucy, after pausing in expectation of his voice, looked up, and caught, in alarm, the strange and peculiar aspect of his features. He approached her slowly, and still silent; but his gaze seemed to grow more earnest and mournful as he advanced.

"Yes," said he, at last, in a broken and indistinct voice, "I see you once more, after all my promises to quit you for ever,—after my solemn farewell, after all that I have cost you;—for, Lucy, you love me,—you love me,—and I shudder while I feel it; after all, I myself have borne and resisted, I once more come wilfully into your presence! How have I burned and sickened for this moment! How have I said, 'Let me behold her once more—only once more, and Fate may then do her worst!' Lucy! dear, dear Lucy! forgive me for my weakness. It is now in bitter and stern reality, the very last I can be guilty of!"

As he spoke, Clifford sank beside her. He took both her hands in his, and holding them, though without pressure, again looked passionately upon her innocent yet eloquent face. It seemed as if he were moved beyond all the ordinary feelings of reunion and of love. He did not attempt to kiss the hands he held; and though the touch thrilled through every vein and fibre in his frame, his clasp was as light as that in which the first timidity of a boy's love ventures to stamp itself!

"You are pale, Lucy," said he, mournfully, "and your cheek is much thinner than it was when I first saw you—when I first saw you! Ah! would for your sake that that had never been! Your spirits were light then, Lucy. Your laugh came from the heart,—your step spurned the earth. Joy broke from your eyes, every thing that breathed around you seemed full of happiness and mirth! and now, look upon me, Lucy; lift those soft eyes, and teach them to flash upon me indignation and contempt! Oh, not thus, not thus! I could leave you happy,—yes, literally blest, if I could fancy you less forgiving, less gentle, less angelic!"

"What have I to forgive?" said Lucy, tenderly.

"What! every thing for which one human being can

pardon another. Have not deceit and injury been my crimes against you? Your peace of mind, your serenity of heart, your buoyancy of temper, have I marred these or not?"

"Oh, Clifford!" said Lucy, rising from herself and from all selfish thoughts, "why,—why will you not trust me? You do not know me, indeed you do not, you are ignorant even of the very nature of a woman, if you think me unworthy of your confidence! Do you believe I could betray it? or, do you think, that if you had done that for which all the world forsook you, I could forsake?"

Lucy's voice faltered at the last words; but it sank, as a stone sinks into deep waters, to the very core of Clifford's heart. Transported from all resolution and all forbearance, he wound his arms around her in one long and impassioned caress; and Lucy, as her breath mingled with his, and her cheek drooped upon his bosom, did indeed feel as if the past could contain no secret powerful enough even to weaken the affection with which her heart clung to his. She was the first to extricate herself from their embrace. She drew back her face from his, and smiling on him through her tears, with a brightness that the smiles of her earliest youth had never surpassed, she said:

"Listen to me. Tell me your history or not, as you will. But, believe me, a woman's wit is often no despicable counsellor. They who accuse themselves the most bitterly, are not often those whom it is most difficult to forgive; and you must pardon me, if I doubt the extent of the blame you would so lavishly impute to yourself. I am now alone in the world—(here the smile withered from Lucy's lips).—My poor father is dead. I can injure no one by my conduct; there is no one on earth to whom I am bound by duty. I am independent, I am rich. You *profess* to love me. I am foolish and vain, and I believe you. Perhaps, also, I have the fond hope which so often makes dupes of women—the hope, that, if you have erred, I may reclaim you; if you have been unfortunate, I may console you! I know, Mr. Clifford, that I am saying that for which many would despise me, and for which perhaps I ought to despise myself; but there are times when we speak only as if some power at our hearts constrained us, despite ourselves,—and it is thus that I have now spoken to you."

It was with an air very unwonted to herself that Lucy had concluded her address, for her usual characteristic was rather softness than dignity; but, as if to correct the meaning of her words, which might otherwise appear unmaidenly, there was a chaste, a proud, yet not the less a tender and sweet propriety, and dignified frankness in her look and manner; so that it would have been utterly impossible for one who heard her, not to have done justice to the nobleness of her motives, or not to have felt both touched and penetrated, as much by respect as by any warmer or more familiar feeling.

Clifford, who had risen while she was speaking, listened with a countenance that varied at every word she uttered:—now all hope—now all despondency. As she ceased, the expression hardened into a settled and compulsive resolution.

"It is well!" said he, mutteringly, "I am worthy of this—very—very worthy! Generous, noble girl!—had I been an emperor, I would have bowed down to you in worship; but to debase, to degrade you—no! no!"

"Is there debasement in love?" murmured Lucy.

Clifford gazed upon her with a sort of enthusiastic and self-gratulatory pride; perhaps he felt, to be thus loved, and by such a creature, *was* matter of pride, even in the lowest circumstances to which he could ever be exposed. He drew his breath hard, set his teeth, and answered—

"You could love, then, an outcast, without birth, fortune, or character!—No! you believe this now, but you could not. Could you desert your country, your friends, and your home—all that you are born and fitted for?—Could you attend one over whom the sword hangs, through a life subjected every hour to discovery and disgrace?—Could you be subjected yourself to the moodiness of an evil memory, and the gloomy silence of remorse?—Could you be the victim of one who has no merit but his love for you, and who, if that love destroy you, becomes utterly redeemed? Yes, Lucy, I was wrong—I will do you justice; all this, nay more, you *could* bear, and your generous nature would disdain the sacrifice! But am I to be all selfish, and *you* all devoted? Are *you* to yield every thing to me, and *I* to accept every thing, and yield none?—Alas! I have but one good, one blessing to yield, and that is yourself. Lucy, I deserve you; I outdo you in generosity: all that you would de-

sert for me is nothing—O God!—nothing to the sacrifice I make to you!—And now, Lucy, I have seen you, and I must once more bid you farewell: I am on the eve of quitting this country for ever. I shall enlist in a foreign service, perhaps—(and Clifford's dark eyes flashed with fire) you will yet hear of me, and not blush when you hear! But—(and his voice faltered, for Lucy, hiding her face with both hands, gave way to her tears and agitation)—but, in one respect, you have conquered! I had believed that you could never be mine—that my past life had *for ever* deprived me of that hope! I now begin, with a rapture that can bear me through all ordeals, to form a more daring vision. A soil may be effaced—an evil name may be redeemed—the past is not set and sealed, without the power of revoking what has been written. If I can win the right of meriting your mercy, I will throw myself on it without reserve; till then, or till death, you will see me no more!”

He dropped on his knee, printed his kiss and his tears upon Lucy's cold hand; the next moment she heard his step on the stairs—the door closed heavily and jarringly upon him,—and Lucy felt one bitter pang, and, for some time at least, she felt no more!

CHAPTER XIII.

Many things fall between the cup and the lip!

Your man doth please me
With his conceit.

* * * * *
Comes Chanon Hugh accoutred as you see—
Disguised!

* * * * *
And thus am I to gull the Constable?
Now have among you for a man at arms!

* * * * *
High Constable was more, though
He laid Dick Tator by the heels.

BEN JONSON'S TALE OF A TUB.

MEANWHILE, Clifford strode rapidly through the streets which surrounded the Judge's house, and, turning to an obscurer *quartier* of the town, entered a gloomy lane or alley. Here he was abruptly accosted by a man wrapped

in a shaggy great coat, and of somewhat a suspicious appearance—

"Aha, Captain!" said he, "you are beyond your time, but all's well!"

Attempting, with indifferent success, the easy self-possession which generally marked his address to his companions, Clifford, repeating the stranger's words, replied—

"All's well!—what! are the prisoners released?"

"No, faith!" answered the man, with a rough laugh, "not yet; but all in good time; it is a little too much to expect the justices to do our work, though, God knows, we often do theirs!"

"What then?" asked Clifford, impatiently.

"Why, the poor fellows had been carried to the town of —, and brought before the queer cuffin* before I arrived, though I set off the moment you told me, and did the journey in four hours. The examination lasted all yesterday, and they were remanded till to-day;—let's see, it is not yet noon; we may be there before it's over!"

"And this is what you call well!" said Clifford, angrily.

"No, Captain, don't be glimflashey! you have not heard all yet!—it seems, that the only thing buffed hard against them was by a stout grazier, who was cried 'Stand' to, some fifty miles off the town; so the queer cuffin thinks of sending the poor fellows to the jail of the county where they did the business!"

"Ah! that may leave some hopes for them;—we must look sharp to their journey; if they once get to prison, their only chances are the file and the bribe. Unhappily, neither of them is so lucky as myself at that trade!"

"No, indeed, there is not a stone wall in England that the great Captain Lovett could not creep through, I'll swear!" said the admiring satellite.

"Saddle the horses and load the pistols!—I will join you in ten minutes. Have my farmer's dress ready, the false hair, &c. Choose your own trim. Make haste;—the 'Three Feathers' is the house of meeting."

"And in ten minutes only, Captain?"

"Punctually!"

The stranger turned a corner, and was out of sight.

* Magistrate.

Clifford, muttering—"Yes, I was the cause of their apprehension; it was I who was sought; it is but fair that I should strike a blow for their escape, before I attempt my own,"—continued his course till he came to the door of a public-house. The sign of a seaman swung aloft, portraying the jolly tar with a fine pewter pot in his hand, considerably huger than his own circumference. An immense pug sat at the door, lolling its tongue out, as if, having stuffed itself to the tongue, it was forced to turn that useful member out of its proper place. The shutters were half-closed; but the sounds of coarse merriment issued jovially forth.

Clifford disconcerted the pug; and crossing the threshold, cried, in a loud tone, "Janseen!"—"Here!" answered a gruff voice; and Clifford, passing on, came to a small parlour adjoining the tap. There, seated by a round oak table, he found mine host, a red, fierce, weather-beaten, but bloated-looking personage, like Dirk Hatteraick in a dropsy.

"How now, Captain!" cried he, in a guttural accent, and interlarding his discourse with certain Dutch graces, which, with our reader's leave, we will omit, as being unable to spell them; "how now!—not gone yet?"

"No!—I start for the coast to-morrow; business keeps me to-day. I came to ask if Mellon may be fully depended on?"

"Ay!—honest to the back-bone!"

"And you are sure that, in spite of my late delays, he will not have left the village?"

"Sure!—what else can I be?—do n't I know Jack Mellon these twenty years? He would lie like a log in a calm for ten months together, without moving a hair's breadth, if he was under orders."

"And his vessel is swift and well-manned, in case of an officer's chase?"

"The Black Molly swift?—ask your grandmother. The Black Molly would outstrip a shark, and be d—d to her!"

"Then good-by, Janseen, there is something to keep your pipe alight; we shall not meet within the three seas again, I think. England is as much too hot for me, as Holland for you!"

"You are a capital fellow!" cried mine host, shaking Clifford by the hand, "and when the lads come to know their loss, they will know they have lost the bravest and

truest gill that ever took to the toby; so, good-by, and be d——d to you!"

With this valedictory benediction, mine host released Clifford; and the robber hastened to his appointment at the "Three Feathers."

He found all prepared. He hastily put on his disguise, and his follower led out his horse, a noble animal of the grand Irish breed, of remarkable strength and bone, and, save only that it was somewhat *sharp* in the quarters, (a fault which they who look for speed as well as grace will easily forgive), of almost unequalled beauty in its symmetry and proportions. Well did the courser know, and proudly did it render obeisance to, its master; snorting impatiently, and rearing from the hand of the attendant robber, the sagacious animal freed itself of the rein, and, as it tossed its long mane in the breeze of a fresh air, came trotting to the place where Clifford stood.

"So ho, Robin!—so ho!—what, thou chafest that I have left thy fellow behind at the Red Cave. Him we may never see more. But, while I have life, I will not leave *thee*, Robin!"

With these words, the robber fondly stroked the shining neck of his favourite steed; and as the animal returned the caress, by rubbing its head against the hands and the athletic breast of its master, Clifford felt at his heart somewhat of that old racy stir of the blood which had been once to him the chief charm of his criminal profession, and which, in the late change of his feelings, he had almost forgotten.

"Well, Robin, well," he renewed, as he kissed the face of his steed;—"well, we will have some days like our old ones yet; thou shalt say, ha! ha! to the trumpet, and bear thy master along on more glorious enterprises than he has yet thanked thee for sharing. Thou wilt now be my only familiar,—my only friend, Robin; we two shall be strangers in a foreign land. But thou wilt make thyself welcome easier than thy lord, Robin; and *thou* wilt forget the old days, and thine old comrades, and thine old loves, when—ha!" and Clifford turned abruptly to his attendant, who addressed him, "it is late, you say; true! look you, it will be unwise for us both to quit London together; you know the sixth milestone, join me there, and we can proceed in company!"

Not unwilling to linger for a parting-cup, the comrade assented to the prudence of the plan proposed; and, after

one or two additional words of caution and advice, Clifford mounted, and rode from the yard of the inn. As he passed through the tall wooden gates into the street, the imperfect gleam of the wintry sun falling over himself and his steed, it was scarcely possible, even in spite of his disguise and rude garb, to conceive a more gallant and striking specimen of the lawless and daring tribe to which he belonged; the height, strength, beauty, and exquisite *grooming* visible in the steed; the sparkling eye, the bold profile, the sinewy chest, the graceful limbs, and the careless and practised horsemanship of the rider.

Looking after his chief with a long and an admiring gaze, the robber said to the ostler of the inn, an aged and withered man, who had seen nine generations of highwaymen rise and vanish;—

"There, Joe, when did you ever look on a hero like that? The bravest heart, the frankest hand, the best judge of a horse, and the handsomest man, that ever did honour to Hounslow!"

"For all that," returned the ostler, shaking his palsied head, and turning back to the tap-room,—“for all that, master, his time be up. Mark my whids, Captain Lovett will not be over the year,—no! nor mayhap the month!”

"Why, you old rascal, what makes you so wise? you will not peach, I suppose!"

"I peach! devil a bit! But there never was the gentleman of the road, great or small, knowing or stupid, as outlived his seventh year. And this will be the Captain's seventh, come the 21st of next month; but he be a fine chap, and I'll go to his hanging!"

"Pish!" said the robber, peevishly,—he himself was verging towards the end of his sixth year,—“pish!”

"Mind, I tells it you, master; and somehow or other I thinks,—and I has experience in these things,—by the *fey** of his eye and the drop of his lip, that the Captain's time will be up *to-day*!”

Here the robber lost all patience, and pushing the hoary boder of evil against the wall, he turned on his heel, and sought some more agreeable companion to share his stirrup-cup.

It was in the morning of the day following that in which the above conversations occurred, that the sage-

* A word difficult to translate; but the closest interpretation of which is, perhaps, “*ill omen*.”

cious Augustus Tomlinson and the valorous Edward Pepper, handcuffed and fettered, were jogging along the road, in a postchaise, with Mr. Nabbem squeezed in by the side of the former, and two other gentlemen in Mr. Nabbem's confidence mounted on the box of the chaise, and interfering sadly, as Long Ned growlingly remarked, with "the beauty of the prospect."

"Ah, well!" quoth Nabbem, unavoidably thrusting his elbow into Tomlinson's side, while he drew out his snuff-box, and helped himself largely to the intoxicating dust. "You had best prepare yourself, Mr. Pepper, for a *change* of prospects! I believe as how there is little to please you in *quod* (prison)."

"Nothing makes men so facetious as misfortune to others!" said Augustus, moralizing, and turning himself, as well as he was able, in order to deliver his body from the pointed elbow of Mr. Nabbem. "When a man is down in the world, all the by-standers, very dull fellows before, suddenly become wits!"

"You reflects on I," said Mr. Nabbem; "well, it does not sinnify a pin, for directly we does our duty, you chaps become howdaciously ungrateful!"

"Ungrateful!" said Pepper: "what a plague have we got to be grateful for? I suppose, you think we ought to tell you, you are the best friend we have, because you have *scrouged* us, neck and croup, into this horrible hole, like turkeys fatted for Christmas. 'Sdeath! one's hair is flatted down like a pancake; and as for one's legs, you had better cut them off at once, than tuck them up in a place a foot square,—to say nothing of these black-guardly irons!"

"The only irons pardonable in your eyes, Ned," said Tomlinson, "are the curling-irons, eh?"

"Now if this is not too much," cried Nabbem, crossly. "You objects to go in a cart like the rest of your profession: and when I puts myself out of the way to obledge you with a shay, you slangs I for 'it!"

"Peace, good Nabbem!" said Augustus, with a sage's dignity. "You must allow a little bad humour in men so unhappily situated as we are."

The soft answer turneth away wrath. Tomlinson's answer softened Nabbem: and, by way of conciliation, he held his snuff-box to the nose of his unfortunate prisoner. Shutting his eyes, Tomlinson long and earnestly

sniffed up the luxury, and as soon as, with his own kerchief of spotted yellow, the officer had wiped from the proboscis some lingering grains, Tomlinson thus spoke:—

"You see us now, Mr. Nabbem, in a state of broken down opposition; but our spirits are not broken too. In our time, we have had something to do with the administration; and our comfort at present, is the comfort of fallen ministers!"

"Oho! you were in the methodist line, before you took to the road?" said Nabbem.

"Not so!" answered Augustus, gravely, "we were the methodists of politics, not of the church, viz. we lived upon our flock without a legal authority to do so, and that which the law withheld from us, our wits gave. But tell me, Mr. Nabbem, are you addicted to politics?"

"Why they says I be," said Mr. Nabbem, with a grin, "and for my part, I thinks all who sarves the King should stand up for him, and take care of their little families!"

"You *speaks* what others *think*!" answered Tomlinson, smiling also, "and I will now, since you like politics, point out to you what I dare say you have not observed before."

"What be that?" said Nabbem.

"A wonderful likeness between the life of the gentlemen adorning his Majesty's senate, and the life of the gentlemen whom you are conducting to his Majesty's jail."

THE LIBELLOUS PARALLEL OF AUGUSTUS TOMLINSON.

"We enter our career, Mr. Nabbem, as your embryo ministers enter parliament,—by bribery and corruption. There is this difference, indeed, between the two cases:—*we* are enticed to enter by the bribery and corruption of *others*,—*they* enter spontaneously, by dint of their *own*. At first, deluded by romantic visions, we like the glory of our career better than the profit, and in our youthful generosity, we profess to attack the rich solely from consideration for the poor? By and by, as we grow more hardened, we laugh at these boyish dreams,—peasant or prince fares equally at our impartial hands; we grasp at the bucket, but we scorn not the thimble-full; we use the word glory only as a trap for proselytes and apprentices:

our fingers, like an office-door, are open for all that can possibly come into them: we consider the wealthy as our salary, the poor as our perquisites. What is this, but a picture of your member of parliament ripening into a Minister,—your patriot mellowing into your placeman? And mark me, Mr. Nabber! is not the very language of both as similar as the deeds? What is the phrase either of us loves to employ? 'To deliver,'—what? 'The Public.'—And do we not both invariably deliver it of the same thing?—viz.; its *purse*! Do we want an excuse for sharing the gold of our neighbours, or abusing them, if they resist?—is not our mutual—our pithiest plea—'Distress!' True, your patriot calls it 'distress of the country,' but does he ever a whit more than we do mean any distress but his own? When we are brought low, and our coats are shabby, do we not both shake our heads and talk of 'reform'? And when—oh! when we are up in the world, do we not both kick 'reform' to the Devil? How often your Parliament man 'vacates his seat,' only for the purpose of resuming it with a weightier purse! How often, dear Ned, have our seats been vacated for the same end! Sometimes, indeed, he *really* finishes his career by accepting the hundreds,—it is by 'accepting the hundreds,' that ours may be finished too!—(Ned drew a long sigh)—Note us now, Mr. Nabber, in the zenith of our prosperity—we have filled our pockets, we have become great in the mouths of our party. Our pals admire us, and our blowens adore! What do we in this short-lived summer? Save, and be thrifty? Ah, no! we must give our dinners, and make light of our lush. We sport horses on the racecourse, and look big at the multitude we have bubbled. Is not this your Minister come into office? Does not this remind you of *his* equipage, *his* palace, *his* plate? In both cases, lightly won, lavishly wasted, and the public, whose cash we have fingered, may at least have the pleasure of gaping at the figure we make with it! This, then, is our harvest of happiness; our foes, our friends, are ready to eat us with envy—yet what is so little enviable as our station? Have we not both our common vexations and our mutual disquietudes? Do we not both bribe—(Nabber shook his head and buttoned his waistcoat)—our enemies, cajole our partisans, bully our dependents, and quarrel with our only friends, viz. ourselves? Is not the secret question with each—It is all confoundedly fine; but how long

will it last? Now, Mr. Nabben, note me,—reverse the portrait: we are fallen, our career is over—the road is shut to us, and new plunderers are robbing the carriages that once we robbed.—Is not this the lot of—no, no! I deceive myself!—Your Ministers, your jobmen, for the most part milk the popular cow while there is a drop in the udder. Your Chancellor declines on a pension,—your Minister attenuates on a grant,—the feet of your great rogues may be gone from the Treasury benches, but they have their little fingers in the Treasury. Their past services are remembered by his Majesty—ours only noted by the Recorder: they save themselves, for they hang by one another; we go to the Devil, for we hang by ourselves: we have our little day of the public, and all is over; but it is *never* over with them. We both hunt the same fox, but we are your fair riders: they are your knowing ones—we take the leap, and our necks are broken: they sneak through the gates, and keep it up to the last!”

As he concluded, Tomlinson's head drooped on his bosom, and it was easy to see that painful comparisons, mingled perhaps with secret murmurs at the injustice of fortune, were rankling in his breast. Long Ned sat in gloomy silence; and even the hard heart of the severe Mr. Nabben was softened by the affecting parallel to which he had listened. They had proceeded without speaking for two or three miles, when Long Ned, fixing his eyes on Tomlinson, exclaimed—

“Do you know, Tomlinson, I think it was a burning shame in Lovett, to suffer us to be carried off like muttens, without attempting to rescue us by the way! It is all his fault that we are here! for it was he whom Nabben wanted, not us!”

“Very true,” said the cunning policeman; “and if I were you, Mr. Pepper, hang me if I would not behave like a man of spirit, and show as little concern for him as he shows for you! Why, Lord now, I does n't want to 'tice you; but this I *does* know, the justices are very anxious to catch Lovett; and one who gives him up, and says a word or two about his cracker, so as to make conviction sartain, may himself be sartain of a free pardon for all little srees and so forth!”

“Ah!” said Long Ned, with a sigh, “that is all very well, Mr. Nabben, but I 'll go to the crap like a gentleman, and not peach of my comrades; and now I think

of it, Lovett could scarcely have assisted us. One man alone, even Lovett, clever as he is, could not have forced us out of the clutches of you and your myrmidons, Mr. Nabhem! And when we were once at —, they took excellent care of us.—But tell me now, my dear Nabhem,” and Long Ned’s voice wheedled itself into something like softness,—“tell me, do you think the grazier will buff it home?”

“No doubt of that,” said the unmoved Nabhem. Long Ned’s face fell. “And what if he does?” said he; “they can but transport us!”

“Do n’t desave yourself, Master Pepper!” said Nabhem: “you’re too old a hand for the herring-pond. They’re resolved to make gallows *apples* of all such Numprels (*Nonpareils*) as you!”

Ned cast a sullen look at the officer.

“A pretty comforter you are!” said he. “I have been in a postchaise with a pleasanter fellow, I’ll swear! You may call me an apple if you will, but, I take it, I am not an apple you’d like to see *peeled*.”

With this pugilistic and menacing pun, the lengthy hero relapsed into meditative silence.

Our travellers were now entering a road skirted on one side by a common of some extent, and, on the other, by a thick hedge-row, which through its breaks gave occasional glimpses of woodland and fallow, interspersed with cross-roads and tiny brooklets.

“There goes a jolly fellow!” said Nabhem, pointing to an athletic-looking man riding before the carriage, dressed in a farmer’s garb, and mounted on a large and powerful horse of the Irish breed. “I dare say he is well acquainted with *your* grazier, Mr. Tomlinson; he looks mortal like one of the same kidney; and here comes another chap,”—(as the stranger was joined by a short stout ruddy man in a carter’s frock, riding on a horse less showy than his comrade’s, but of the lengthy, reedy, lank, yet muscular race, which a knowing jockey would like to bet on;)—“Now that’s what I call a comely lad!” continued Nabhem, pointing to the latter horseman; “none of your thin-faced, dark, strapping fellows like that Captain Lovett, as the blowens raves about, but a nice, tight little body, with a face like a carrot! that’s a beauty for my money! honesty’s stamped on his face, Mr. Tomlinson! I dare says,—(and the policeman grinned, for he had been a lad of the cross in his own day)—

I dare says, poor innocent booby, he knows none of the ways of Lunnun town; and if he has not as merry a life as some folks, mayhap he may have a longer. But a merry one for ever, for such lads as us, Mr. Pepper!—I say, has you heard as how Bill Fang went to Scratch land (Scotland) and was stretched for smashing queer screens? (i. e. hung for uttering forged notes.) He died nation game; for when his father, who was a gray-headed parson, came to see him after the sentence, he says to the governor, says he, 'Give us a tip, old 'un, to pay the expenses, and die dacently.' The parson forks him out ten shiners, preaching all the while like winky. Bob drops one of the guineas between his fingers, and says, 'Hollo, dad, you have only tipped us nine of the yellow boys,—just now you said as how it was ten!' On this the parish-bull, who was as poor as if he'd been a mouse of the church, instead of a curate, lugs out another; and Bob, turning round to the jailer, cries, 'Flung the governor out of a guinea, by G—d!*' Now, that's what I calls keeping it up to the last!"

Mr. Nabbem had scarcely finished this anecdote, when the farmer-like stranger, who had kept up by the side of the chaise, suddenly rode to the window, and, touching his hat, said in a Norfolk accent, "Were the gentlemen we met on the road belonging to your party? They were asking after a chaise and pair."

"No!" said Nabbem, "there be no gentlemen as belongs to our party?" So saying, he tipped a knowing wink at the farmer, and glanced over his shoulder at the prisoners.

"What! you are going all alone?" said the farmer.

"Ay, to be sure," answered Nabbem; "not much danger, I think, in the daytime, with the sun out as big as a sixpence, which is as big as ever I see'd him in this country!"

At that moment, the shorter stranger, whose appearance had attracted the praise of Mr. Nabbem,—(that personage was himself very short and ruddy,)—and who had hitherto been riding close by the post-horses, and talking to the officers on the box, suddenly threw himself from his steed, and in the same instant that he arrested the horses of the chaise, struck the postilion to the ground, with a short heavy bludgeon which he drew from his

* Fact.

frack. A whistle was heard and answered, as if by a signal: three fellows armed with bludgeons leaped from the hedge; and in the interim, the pretended farmer, dismounting, flung open the door of the chaise, and seizing Mr. Nabben by the collar, swung him to the ground with a celerity that became the circular rotundity of the policeman's figure, rather than the deliberate gravity of his dignified office.

Rapid and instantaneous as had been this work, it was not without a check. Although the policemen had not dreamed of a rescue in the very face of the day, and on the high-road, their profession was not that which suffered them easily to be surprised. The two guardians of the dickey leaped nimbly to the ground; but before they had time to use their firearms, two of the new aggressors, who had appeared from the hedge, closed upon them, and bore them to the ground; while this scuffle took place, the farmer had disarmed the prostrate Nabben, and giving him in charge to the remaining confederate, extricated Tomlinson and his comrade from the chaise.

"Hist!" said he, in a whisper, "beware my name; my disguise hides me at present—lean on me—only through the hedge, a cart waits there, and you are safe!"

With these broken words he assisted the robbers, as well as he could, in spite of their manacles, through the same part of the hedge from which the three allies had sprung. They were already through the barrier, only the long legs of Ned Pepper lingered behind; when at the far end of the road, which was perfectly straight, a gentleman's carriage became visible. A strong hand from the interior of the hedge seizing Pepper, dragged him through, and Clifford,—for the reader need not be told who was the farmer,—perceiving the approaching reinforcement, shouted at once for flight. The robber, who had guarded Nabben, and who indeed was no other than Old Bags, slow as he habitually was, lost not an instant in providing for himself; before you could say "Laudamus," he was on the other side of the hedge; the two men, engaged with the police-officers, were not capable of an equal celerity; but Clifford, throwing himself into the contest and engaging the policemen, gave the robbers the opportunity of escape. They scrambled through the fence, the officers, tough fellows and keen, clinging lustily to them, till one was felled by Clifford,

and the other catching against a stump, was forced to relinquish his hold; he then sprang back into the road and prepared for Clifford, who now, however, occupied himself rather in fugitive than warlike measures. Meanwhile, the moment the other rescuers had passed the rubicon of the hedge, their flight, and that of the gentlemen who had passed before them, commenced. On this mystic side of the hedge was a cross-road, striking at once through an intricate and wooded part of the country, which allowed speedy and ample opportunities of dispersion. Here a light cart, drawn by two swift horses in a tandem fashion, awaited the fugitives. Long Ned and Augustus were stowed down at the bottom of this vehicle; three fellows filed away at their irons, and a fourth, who had hitherto remained inglorious with the cart, gave the lash—and he gave it handsomely—to the coursers. Away rattled the equipage; and thus was achieved a flight, still memorable in the annals of the elect, and long quoted as one of the boldest and most daring exploits that illicit enterprise ever accomplished.

Clifford and his equestrian comrade only remained in the field, or rather the road; the former sprang at once on his horse, the latter was not long in following the example. But the policeman, who, it has been said, baffled in detaining the fugitives of the hedge, had leaped back into the road, was not idle in the mean while. When he saw Clifford about to mount, instead of attempting to seize the enemy, he recurred to his pistol, which in the late struggle hand to hand, he had been unable to use, and taking sure aim at Clifford, whom he judged at once to be the leader of the rescue, he lodged a ball in the right side of the robber, at the very moment he had set spurs in his horse and turned to fly. Clifford's head drooped to the saddle-bow. Fiercely the horse sprang on; the robber endeavoured, despite his reeling senses, to retain his seat—once he raised his head—once he nerved his slackened and listless limbs—and then, with a faint groan he fell to the earth. The horse bounded but one step more, and, true to the tutorship it had received, stopped abruptly. Clifford raised himself with great difficulty on one arm; with the other hand he drew forth a pistol; he pointed it deliberately towards the officer who had wounded him; the man stood motionless, cowering and spell-bound, beneath the dilating eye of the robber. It was but for a moment that the man

had cause for dread ; for muttering between his ground teeth, "Why waste it on an enemy?" Clifford turned the muzzle towards the head of the unconscious steed, which seemed sorrowfully and wistfully to incline towards him. "Thou," he said, "whom I have fed and loved, shalt never know hardship from another!" and with a merciful cruelty, he dragged himself one pace nearer to his beloved steed, uttered a well-known word, which brought the docile creature to his side, and placing the muzzle of the pistol close to its ear, he fired, and fell back senseless at the exertion. The animal staggered, and dropped down dead.

Meanwhile, Clifford's comrade, profiting by the surprise and sudden panic of the officer, was already out of reach, and darting across the common, he and his ragged courser speedily vanished.

CHAPTER XIV.

—Lose I not
With him what fortune could in life allot?
Lose I not hope, life's coral?
* * * *

In fact, the lessons he from prudence took,
Were written in his mind as in a book.
There what to do he read, and what to shun,
And all commanded was with promptness done:
He seemed without a passion to proceed,
* * * *

Yet some believed those passions only slept!

CRABBE.

* * * *

Relics of love and life's enchanted spring!

A. WATTS, on burning a Packet of Letters.

* * * *

Many and sad and deep

Were the thoughts folded in thy silent breast!

Thou too couldst watch and weep!

MRS. HEMANS.

WHILE Sir William Brandon was pursuing his ambitious schemes, and, notwithstanding Lucy's firm and steady refusal of Lord Mauleverer, was still determined on that ill-sorted marriage; while Mauleverer himself, day after day, attended at the Judge's house, and, though he spoke not of love, looked it with all his might: it be-

came obvious to every one but the lover and the guardian, that Lucy herself was rapidly declining in appearance and health. Ever since the day she had last seen Clifford, her spirit, before greatly shattered, had refused to regain even a likeness to its natural cheerful and happy tone. She became silent and abstracted; even her gentleness of temper altered at times into a moody and fretful humour. Neither to books nor music, nor any art by which time is beguiled, she resorted for a momentary alleviation of the bitter feelings at her heart, or for a transient forgetfulness of their sting. The whole world of her mind had been shaken. Her pride was wounded; her love galled; her faith in Clifford gave way at length to gloomy and dark suspicion. Nothing, she now felt, but a name as well as fortunes utterly abandoned, could have justified him for the stubbornness of heart in which he had fled and deserted her. Her own self-acquittal no longer consoled her in affliction. She condemned herself for her weakness, from the birth of her ill-starred affection to the crisis it had now acquired. "Why did I not wrestle with it at first?" she said, bitterly. "Why did I allow myself so easily to love one unknown to me, and equivocal in station, despite the cautions of my uncle and the whispers of the world?" Alas! Lucy did not remember, that at the time she was guilty of this weakness she had not learned to reason as she since reasoned. Her faculties were but imperfectly awakened; her experience of the world was utter ignorance. She scarcely knew that she loved, and she knew not at all that the delicious and excited sentiment which filled her being could ever become as productive of evil and peril as it had done now; and even *had* her reason been more developed, and her resolutions more strong, does the exertion of reason and resolution always avail against the master-passion? Love, it is true, is *not* unconquerable; but how few have ever, mind and soul, coveted the conquest! Disappointment makes a vow, but the heart records it not. Or, in the noble image of one who has so tenderly and so truly portrayed the feelings of her own sex,—

———" We make
A ladder of our thoughts, where angels step,
But sleep ourselves at the foot!"^a

^a "The History of the Lyre," by L. E. L.
We are informed that this charming and amiable young lady, not content

Before Clifford had last seen her, we have observed that Lucy had (and it was a consolation) clung to the belief that, despite of appearances and his own confession, his past life had not been such as to place him without the pale of her just affections; and there were frequent moments when, remembering that the death of her father had removed the only being who could assert an unanswerable claim to the dictation of her actions, she thought that Clifford, hearing her hand was utterly at her own disposal, might again appear, and again urge a suit which she felt - o few circumstances could induce her to deny. All this half-acknowledged yet earnest train of reasoning and hope vanished from the moment he had quitted her uncle's house. His words bore no misinterpretation. He had not yielded even to her own condescension, and her cheek burned as she recalled it. Yet he loved her. She saw, she knew it in his every word and look! Bitter, then, and dark must be that remorse which could have conquered every argument but that which urged him to leave her, when he might have claimed her ever. 'True, that when his letter formerly bade her farewell, the same self-accusing language was recurred to, the same dark hints and allusions to infamy or guilt; yet never till now had she interpreted them rigidly, and never till now had she dreamed how far their meaning could extend. Still, what crimes could he have committed? The true ones never occurred to Lucy. She shuddered to ask herself, and hushed her doubts in a gloomy and torpid silence! But through all her accusations against herself, and through all her awakened suspicions against Clifford, she could not but acknowledge that something noble and not unworthy of her mingled in his conduct, and occasioned his resistance to her and to himself; and this belief, perhaps, irritated even while it touched her, and kept her feelings in a perpetual struggle and conflict, which her

with her triumphs in poetry, is about to enter our own province in prose, and that, at this moment, she is engaged in the composition of a novel. Could we, who have perhaps more than once disappointed the public in ourself, venture to believe we had the power to excite its expectations in another, we would fain hazard the prediction of a great and a deserved popularity for the said novel, whenever it appear. Every one knows that the writer of the *Supernaturalist* can command, at will, the auxiliaries of sentiment, thought, imagination, and an exceeding richness of imagery and glow of diction; but, perhaps, every one does not yet know that she can also command what are generally more calculated to give celebrity to a novel, viz. a playful and lively wit, an acute and unerring observation, an intuitive tact in the shades and varieties of manner, and, above all, the art to make trifles singularly entertaining.

delicate frame and soft mind were little able to endure. When the nerves once break, how breaks the character with them! How many ascetics, withered and soured, do we meet in the world, who but for one shock to the heart and form might have erred on the side of meekness! Whether it come from wo or disease, the stroke which mars a single fibre plays strange havoc with the mind. Slaves we are to our muscles, and puppets to the spring of the capricious blood; and the great soul, with all its capacities, its solemn attributes, and sounding claims, is, while on earth, but a jest to this mountebank—the body—from the dream which toys it for an hour, to the lunacy which shivers it into a driveller, laughing as it plays with its own fragments, and reeling benighted and blinded to the grave!

We have before said, that Lucy was fond both of her uncle and his society; and still, whenever the subject of Lord Mauleverer and his suit was left untouched, there was that in the conversation of Sir William Brandon which aroused an interest in her mind, engrossed and self-consuming as it had become. Sorrow, indeed, and sorrow's companion, reflection, made her more and more capable of comprehending a very subtle and intricate character. There is no secret for discovering the human heart like affliction—especially the affliction which springs from passion. Does a writer startle you with his insight into your nature, be sure that he has mourned: such lore is the alchymy of tears. Hence the insensible and almost universal confusion of idea which confounds melancholy with depth, and finds but hollow inanity in the symbol of a laugh. Pitiable error! Reflection first leads us to gloom, but its next stage is to brightness. The Laughing Philosopher had reached the goal of Wisdom: Heraclitus whimpered at the starting-post. But enough for Lucy to gain even the vestibule of Philosophy.

Notwithstanding the soreness we naturally experience towards all who pertinaciously arouse an unpleasing subject, and despite therefore of Brandon's furtherance of Mauleverer's courtship, Lucy felt herself incline strangely, and with something of a daughter's affection, towards this enigmatical being: despite too of all the cold and measured vice of his character,—the hard and wintry grayness of heart with which he regarded the welfare of others, or the substances of Truth, Honour, and Virtue,—the callousness of his fossilized affections, which lie

his ~~man~~ being softened but for a moment, and no warm and healthful impulse struck, save into an evanescent and idle flash;—despite of this consummate obduracy and worldliness of temperament, it is not paradoxical to say that there was something in the man which Lucy found at times analogous to her own vivid and generous self. This was, however, only noticeable when she led him to talk over earlier days, and when by degrees the sarcastic lawyer forgot the present, and grew eloquent, not over the actions but the feelings of the past. He would speak to her for hours of his youthful dreams, his occupations, or his projects, as a boy. Above all, he loved to converse with her upon Warlock, its remains of ancient magnificence, the green banks of the placid river that enriched its domains, and the summer pomp of wood and heathland, amid which his noon-day visions had been nursed.

When he spoke of these scenes and days, his countenance softened, and something in its expression, recalling to Lucy the image of one still dearer, made her yearn to him the more. An ice seemed broken from his mind, and streams of released and gentle feelings, mingled with kindly and generous sentiment, flowed forth. Suddenly, a thought, a word, brought him back to the present—his features withered abruptly into their cold placidity, or latent sneer: the seal closed suddenly on the broken spell, and, like the victim of a fairy-tale, condemned, at a stated hour, to assume another shape, the very being you had listened to seemed vanished, and replaced by one whom you startled to behold. But there was one epoch of his life on which he was always silent, and that was, his first onset into the actual world—the period of his early struggle into wealth and fame. All *that* space of time seemed as a dark gulf, over which he had passed, and become changed at once—as a traveller landing on a strange climate may adopt, on the moment he touches its shore, its costume and its language.

All *men*—the most modest—have a common failing, but it is one which often assumes the domine and mask—*Pride!* Brandon was, however, proud to a degree very rare in men who have risen and flourished in the world. Out of the wrecks of all other feelings, this imperial survivor made one great palace for its residence, and called the fabric 'Disdain.' Scorn was the real essence of Brandon's nature: even in the blindest disguises, the smoothness of his voice, the insinuation of his smile, the

popular and supple graces of his manners, an oily derision floated, rarely discernible, it is true, but proportioning its strength and quantum to the calm it produced.

In the interim, while his character thus displayed and contradicted itself in private life, his fame was rapidly rising in public estimation. Unlike many of his brethren, the brilliant lawyer had exceeded expectation, and shone even yet more conspicuously in the less adventitiously-aided duties of the Judge. Envy itself—and Brandon's political virulence, bad, despite of his personal affability, made him many foes,—was driven into acknowledging the profundity of his legal knowledge, and in admiring the manner in which the peculiar functions of his novel dignity were discharged. No juvenile lawyer brow-beat—no hackneyed casuist puzzled him; even his attention never wandered from the dullest case subjected to his tribunal. A painter, desirous of stamping on his canvass the portrait of an upright Judge, could scarcely have found a finer realization for his *beau idéal* than the austere, collected, keen, yet majestic countenance of Sir William Brandon, such as it seemed in the trappings of office, and from the seat of justice.

The newspapers were not slow in recording the singular capture of the notorious Lovett. The boldness with which he had planned and executed the rescue of his comrades, joined to the suspense in which his wound for some time kept the public, as to his escape from one death by the postern gate of another, caused a very considerable ferment and excitation in the popular mind; and, to feed the impulse, the journalists were little slothful in retailing every anecdote, true or false, which they could collect, touching the past adventures of the daring highwayman. Many a good story then came to light, which partook as much of the comic as the tragic; for not a single one of the robber's adventures was noted for cruelty or bloodshed; many of them betokened rather an hilarious and jovial spirit of mirthful enterprise. It seemed as if he had thought the highway a capital arena for jokes, and only robbed for the sake of venting a redundant affection for jesting. Persons felt it rather a sin to be severe with a man of so merry a disposition; and it was especially observable, that not one of the ladies who had been despoiled by the robber could be prevailed on to prosecute: on the contrary, they always talked of the event as one of the most agreeable remembrances

In their lives, and seemed to bear a provoking gratitude to the comely offender, rather than resentment. All the gentlemen were not, however, of so placable a temper; and two sturdy farmers, with a grazier to boot, were ready to swear "through thick and thin" to the identity of the prisoner with a horseman who had civilly borne each of them company for an hour in their several homeward rides from certain fairs, and had carried the pleasure of his society, they very gravely asserted, considerably beyond a joke; so that the state of the prisoner's affairs took a very sombre aspect; and the counsel—an old hand—intrusted with his cause, declared confidently that there was not a chance. But a yet more weighty accusation, because it came from a much nobler quarter, awaited Clifford. In the robbers' cavern were found several articles answering exactly to the description of those valuables feloniously abstracted from the person of Lord Mauleverer. That nobleman attended to inspect the articles and to view the prisoner. The former he found himself able to swear to, with a very tranquillized conscience: the latter he beheld feverish, attenuated, and in a moment of delirium, on the sick-bed to which his wound had brought him. He was at no loss, however, to recognise in the imprisoned felon the gay and conquering Clifford, whom he had once even honoured with his envy. Although his former dim and vague suspicions of Clifford were thus confirmed, the good-natured peer felt some slight compunction at appearing as his prosecutor: this compunction, however, vanished the moment he left the sick man's apartment; and after a little patriotic conversation with the magistrates about the necessity of public duty—a theme which brought virtuous tears into the eyes of those respectable functionaries—he re-entered his carriage, returned to town, and after a lively dinner, *tête-à-tête* with an old *chère amie*, who, of all her charms, had preserved only the attraction of conversation and the capacity of relishing a *salmi*, Mauleverer, the very evening of his return, betook himself to the house of Sir William Brandon.

When he entered the hall, Barlow, the judge's favourite servant, met him, with rather a confused and mysterious air, and arresting him as he was sauntering into Brandon's library, informed him that Sir William was particularly engaged, but would join his Lordship in the

drawing-room. While Barlow was yet speaking, and Mauleverer was bending his right ear (with which he heard the best) towards him, the library-door opened, and a man in a very coarse and ruffianly garb awkwardly bowed himself out. "So, this is the particular engagement," thought Mauleverer; "a strange Sir Pandarus; but those *old* fellows have droll tastes."

"I may go in now, my good fellow, I suppose," said his Lordship to Barlow; and without waiting an answer, he entered the library. He found Brandon alone, and bending earnestly over some letters which strewed his table. Mauleverer carelessly approached, and threw himself into an opposite chair. Sir William lifted his head, as he heard the movement, and Mauleverer (reckless as was that personage) was chilled and almost awed by the expression of his friend's countenance. Brandon's face was one which, however pliant, nearly always wore one pervading character—*calmness*: whether in the smoothness of social courtesy, or the austerity of his official station, or the bitter sarcasm which escaped him at no unfrequent intervals; still a certain hard and inflexible dryness stamped both his features and his air. But at this time a variety of feelings, not ordinarily eloquent in the outward man, struggled in his dark face, expressive of all the energy and passion of his powerful and masculine nature; there seemed to speak from his features and eyes something of shame, and anger, and triumph, and regret, and scorn. All these various emotions, which, it appears almost a paradox to assert, met in the same expression, nevertheless were so individually and almost fearfully stamped, as to convey at once their signification to the mind of Mauleverer. He glanced towards the letters, in which the writing seemed faint and discoloured by time or damp; and then once more regarding the face of Brandon, said, in rather an anxious and subdued tone—

"Heavens, Brandon, are you ill? or has any thing happened?—you alarm me."

"Do you recognise these locks?" said Brandon, in a hollow voice; and from under the letters he drew some ringlets of an auburn hue, and pushed them with an averted face towards Mauleverer.

The Earl took them up—regarded them for a few moments—changed colour, but shook his head with a negative gesture, as he laid them once more on the table.

"This handwriting, then?" renewed the Judge, in a yet more impressive and painful voice; and he pointed to the letters.

Mauleverer raised one of them, and held it between his face and the lamp, so that whatever his features might have betrayed was hidden from his companion. At length he dropped the letter with an affected *nonchalance*, and said—

"Ah, I know the writing even at this distance of time; this letter is directed to you!"

"It is,—so are all these," said Brandon, with the same voice of preternatural and strained composure. "They have come back to me after an absence of nearly twenty-five years; they are the letters she wrote to me in the days of our courtship—(here Brandon laughed scornfully)—she carried them away with her, you know when; and (a pretty clod of consistency is woman!) she kept them, it seems, to her dying day!"

The subject in discussion, whatever it might be, appeared a sore one to Mauleverer; he turned uneasily on his chair, and said, at length—

"Well, poor creature! these are painful remembrances, since it turned out so unhappily; but it was not our fault, dear Brandon; we were men of the world,—we knew the value of—of—women, and treated them accordingly!"

"Right! right! right!" cried Brandon, vehemently, laughing in a wild and loud disdain; the intense force of which it would be in vain to attempt expressing. "Right! and faith, my Lord, I repine not at my balance, nor repent my estimation."

"So, so, that's well!" said Mauleverer, still not at his ease, and hastening to change the conversation. "But, my dear Brandon, I have strange news for you! You remember that damned fellow, Clifford, who had the insolence to address himself to your adorable niece? I told you I suspected that long friend of his of having made my acquaintance somewhat unpleasantly, and I therefore doubted of Clifford himself. Well, my dear friend, this Clifford is,—whom do you think?—no other than Mr. Lovett, of Newgate celebrity."

"You do not say so!" rejoined Brandon, apathetically, as he slowly gathered his papers together, and deposited them in a drawer.

"Indeed it is true; and what is more, Brandon, this

fellow is one of the very identical highwaymen who robbed me on my road from Bath. No doubt he did me the same kind office on my road to Mauleverer Park."

"Possibly," said Brandon, who appeared absorbed in a reverie.

"Ay!" answered Mauleverer, piqued at this indifference. "But do you not see the consequences to your niece?"

"My niece!" repeated Brandon, rousing himself.

"Certainly. I grieve to say it, my dear friend,—but she was young, very young, when at Bath. She suffered this fellow to address her too openly. Nay,—for I will be frank,—she was suspected of being in love with him!"

"She was in love with him," said Brandon, dryly, and fixing the malignant coldness of his eye upon the suitor. "And, for aught I know," added he, "she is so at this moment."

"You are cruel!" said Mauleverer, disconcerted. "I trust not, for the sake of my continued addresses."

"My dear Lord," said Brandon, urbanely taking the courtier's hand, while the *anguis in herba* of his sneer played around his compressed lips,—“my dear Lord, we are old friends, and need not deceive each other. You wish to marry my niece, because she is an heiress of great fortune, and you suppose that my wealth will in all probability swell her own. Moreover, she is more beautiful than any other young lady of your acquaintance; and, polished by your example, may do honour to your taste as well as your prudence. Under these circumstances, you will, I am quite sure, look with lenity on her girlish errors, and not love her the less because her foolish fancy persuades her that she is in love with another."

"Ahem!" said Mauleverer, "you view the matter with more sense than sentiment; but look you, Brandon, we must try, for both our sakes, if possible, to keep the identity of Lovett with Clifford from being known. I do not see why it should be. No doubt he was on his guard while playing the gallant, and committed no atrocity at Bath. The name of Clifford is hitherto perfectly unsullied. No fraud, no violence are attached to the appellation; and if the rogue will but keep his own counsel, we may hang him out of the way without the secret transpiring."

"But, if I remember right," said Brandon, "the newspapers say that this Lovett will be tried some seventy or eighty miles only from Bath, and that gives a chance of recognition."

"Ay, but he will be devilishly altered, I imagine, for his wound has already been but a bad beautifier to his face; moreover, if the dog has any delicacy, he will naturally dislike to be known as the gallant of that gay city, where he shone so successfully, and will disguise himself as well as he is able. I hear wonders of his powers of self-transformation."

"But he may commit himself on the point between this and his trial," said Brandon.

"I think of ascertaining how far that is likely, by sending my valet down to him (you know one treats these gentlemen highwaymen with a certain consideration, and hangs them with all due respect to their feelings), to hint that it will be doubtless very unpleasant to him, under his 'present unfortunate circumstances,' (is not that the phrase?) to be known as the gentleman who enjoyed so deserved a popularity at Bath, and that, though 'the laws of my country compel me' to prosecute him, yet, should he desire it, he may be certain that I will preserve his secret.—Come, Brandon, what say you to that manœuvre? it will answer my purpose, and make the gentleman,—for doubtless he is all sensibility,—shed tears at my generous forbearance!"

"It is no bad idea," said Brandon, "I commend you for it. At all events, it is necessary that my niece should not know the situation of her lover. She is a girl of a singular turn of mind, and fortune has made her independent. Who knows but what she might commit some folly or another, write petitions to the King, and beg me to present them, or go—for she has a world of romance in her—to prison, to console him; or, at all events, she would beg my kind offices on his behalf—a request peculiarly awkward, as in all probability I shall have the honour of trying him."

"Ay, by-the-by, so you will. And I fancy the poor rogue's audacity will not cause you to be less severe than you usually are. They say you promise to make more human pendulums than any one of your brethren."

"They do say that, do they?" said Brandon; "well, I own I have a bile against my species; I loathe their folly and their half vices. '*Ridet et odit*' is my motto; and I

allow, that it is not the philosophy that makes men merciful!"

"Well, Juvenal's wisdom be yours!—mine be Horace's!" rejoined Mauleverer, as he picked his teeth; "but I am glad you see the absolute necessity of keeping this secret from Lucy's suspicion. She never reads the papers, I suppose—girls never do!"

"No!—and I will take care not to have them thrown in her way; and as, in consequence of my poor brother's recent death, she sees nobody but us, there is little chance, should Lovett's right to the name of Clifford be discovered, that it should reach her ears!"

"But those confounded servants!"

"True enough!—but consider, that before *they* know it, the newspapers will; so that, should it be needful, we shall have our own time to caution them. I need only say to Lucy's woman—'A poor gentleman, a friend of the late Squire's, whom your mistress used to dance with, and you must have seen—Captain Clifford,—is to be tried for his life: it will shock her, poor thing! in her present state of health, to tell her of so sad an event to her father's friend; therefore be silent, as you value your place and ten guineas,'—and I may be tolerably sure of caution!"

"You ought to be chairman to the 'Ways and Means' Committee!" cried Mauleverer; "my mind is now easy; and when once poor Clifford is gone—'*fallen from a high estate*,'—we may break the matter gently to her, and, as I intend thereon to be very respectful, very delicate, &c., she cannot but be sensible of my kindness and real affection!"

"And if a live dog be better than a dead lion," added Brandon, "surely an animate lord will be better than a hanged highwayman!"

"According to ordinary logic," rejoined Mauleverer, "that syllogism is clear enough; and though I believe a girl may cling, now and then, to the memory of a departed lover, I do not think she will when the memory is allied with shame. Love is nothing more than vanity pleased;—wound the vanity, and you destroy the love! Lucy will be forced, after having made so bad a choice of a lover, to make a good one in a husband,—in order to recover her self-esteem!"

"And therefore *you* are certain of her!" said Brandon, ironically.

"Thanks to my star—my garter—my ancestor, the first baron, and myself, the first earl,—I hope I am!" said Mauleverer, and the conversation turned. Mauleverer did not stay much longer with the Judge; and Brandon, left alone, recurred once more to the perusal of his letters.

We scarcely know what sensations it would have occasioned in one who had known Brandon only in his later years, could he have read these letters, referring to so much earlier a date. There was in the keen, and, if we may so say, the arid character of the man, so little that recalled any idea of courtship, or youthful gallantry, that a correspondence of that nature would have appeared almost as unnatural as the fictitious loves of plants, or the amatory softening of a mineral. The correspondence now before Brandon was descriptive of various feelings, but all appertaining to the same class: most of them were apparent answers to letters from him. One while, they replied tenderly to expressions of tenderness, but intimated a doubt whether the writer would be able to constitute his future happiness, and atone for certain sacrifices of birth and fortune, and ambitious prospects to which she alluded: at other times, a vein of latent coquetry seemed to pervade the style—an indescribable air of coolness and reserve contrasted former passages in the correspondence, and was calculated to convey to the reader an impression, that the feelings of the lover were not altogether adequately returned. Frequently, the writer, as if Brandon had expressed himself sensible of this conviction, reproached him for unjust jealousy and unworthy suspicion. And the tone of the reproach varied in each letter; sometimes it was gay and satirizing; at others, soft and expostulatory; at others, gravely reasoning; and often haughtily indignant. Still, throughout the whole correspondence, on the part of the mistress, there was sufficient stamp of individuality to give a shrewd examiner some probable guess at the writer's character. He would have judged her, perhaps, capable of strong and ardent feeling, but ordinarily of a light and capricious turn, and seemingly prone to imagine and to resent offence. With these letters were mingled others in Brandon's writing—of how different, of how impassioned a description! All that a deep, proud, meditative, exacting character could dream of love given, or require of love returned, was

poured burningly over the pages; yet they were full of reproach—of jealousy—of a nice and torturing observation, as calculated to wound, as the ardour might be fitted to charm; and often, the bitter tendency to disdain that distinguished his temperament, broke through the fondest enthusiasm of courtship, or the softest outpourings of love. “You saw me not yesterday,” he wrote in one letter, “but I saw you; all day I was by you; you gave not a look which passed me unnoticed; you made not a movement which I did not chronicle in my memory.—Julia, do you tremble when I tell you this?—Yes, if you have a heart, *I know* these words have stabbed it to the core! You may affect to answer me indignantly! Wise dissembler!—it is very skilful—very, to assume anger, when you have no reply. I repeat, during the whole of that party of pleasure—(pleasure!—well, your tastes, it must be acknowledged, are exquisite!)—which you enjoyed yesterday, and which you so faintly asked me to share, my eye was on you. You did not know that I was in the wood when you took the arm of the incomparable Digby, with so pretty a semblance of alarm at the moment the snake, which my foot disturbed, glided across your path. You did not know I was within hearing of the tent where you made so agreeable a repast, and from which your laughter sent peals so merry and so numerous.—Laughter!—Oh, Julia! *can* you tell me that you love, and yet be happy, even to mirth, when I am away! Love!—Oh God, how different a sensation is mine!—Mine makes my whole principle of life! yours!—I tell you, that I think, at moments, I would rather have your hate, than the lukewarm sentiment you bear to me, and honour by the name of ‘affection.’ Pretty phrase!—I have *no affection* for you! Give me not that sickly word; but try with me, Julia, to invent some expression that has never filtered a paltry meaning through the lips of another! Affection!—why, that is a sister’s word—a girl’s word to her pet squirrel!—never was it made for that ruby and most ripe mouth! Shall I come to your house this evening?—your mother has asked me, and you—*you* heard her, and said nothing.—Oh! but that was maiden reserve—was it?—and maiden reserve caused you to take up a book the moment I left you, as if my company made but an ordinary amusement, instantly to be replaced by another! When I have seen you, society, books, food, all are hateful to

me; but *you*, sweet Julia, *you* can read, can you? Why, when I left you, I lingered by the parlour window for hours, till dusk, and you never once lifted your eyes, nor saw me pass and re-pass. At least, I thought you would have watched my steps, when I left the house; but I err, charming moralist; according to you, that vigilance would have been meanness."

In another part of the correspondence, a more grave, if not a deeper, gush of feeling struggled for expression.

"You say, Julia, that were you to marry one who thinks so much of what he surrenders for you, and who requires from yourself so vast a return of love, you should tremble for the future happiness of both of us. Julia, the triteness of that fear proves that you love not at all. I do not tremble for our future happiness; on the contrary, the intensity of my passion for you makes me *know*, that we never can be happy! never beyond the first rapture of our union. Happiness is a quiet and tranquil feeling. No feeling that I can possibly bear to you will ever receive those epithets,—I know that I shall be wretched and accursed, when I am united to you. Start not; I will presently tell you why. But I do not dream of happiness, neither (could you fathom one drop of the dark and limitless ocean of my emotions) would you name to me that word. It is not the mercantile and callous calculation of chances for 'future felicity'—(what homily supplied you with so choice a term?)—that enters into the heart that cherishes an all-pervading love. Passion looks only to one object, to nothing beyond,—I thirst, I consume, not for happiness, but *you*. Were your possession inevitably to lead me to a gulf of anguish and shame, think you I should covet it one jot the less? If you carry one thought, one hope, one dim fancy, beyond the event that makes you mine, you may be more worthy of the esteem of others; but you are utterly undeserving of *my love*.

* * * * *

"I will tell you now why I know we cannot be happy. In the first place, when you say, that I am proud of birth, that I am morbidly ambitious, that I am anxious to shine in the great world, and that after the first intoxication of love has passed away, I shall feel bitterness against one who has so humbled my pride and darkened my prospects, I am not sure that you wholly err. But I

am sure that the instant remedy is in your power. Have you patience, Julia, to listen to a kind of history of myself, or rather of my feelings? if so, perhaps it may be the best method of explaining all that I would convey. You will see, then, that *my* family pride and *my* worldly ambition are not founded altogether on those basements which move my laughter in another:—if *my* feelings thereon are really, however, as you would insinuate, equal matter for derision, behold, my Julia, I can laugh equally at them! So pleasant a thing to me is scorn, that I would rather despise myself than have no one to despise;—but to my narrative! You must know that there are but two of us, sons of a country squire, of old family, which once possessed large possessions and something of historical renown. We lived in an old country place; my father was a convivial dog, a fox-hunter, a drunkard, yet in his way a fine gentleman,—and a very disreputable member of society. The first feelings towards him that I can remember, were those of shame. Not much matter of family pride here, you will say! True, and that is exactly the reason which made me cherish family pride elsewhere. My father's house was filled with guests, some high, and some low,—they all united in ridicule of the host. I soon detected the laughter, and you may imagine that it did not please me. Meanwhile, the old huntsman, whose family was about as ancient as ours, and whose ancestors had officiated in his capacity, for the ancestors of his master, time out of mind, told me story after story about the Brandons of yore. I turned from the stories to more legitimate history, and found the legends were tolerably true. I learned to glow at this discovery: the pride humbled when I remembered my sire, revived when I remembered my ancestors,—I became resolved to emulate them, to restore a sunken name, and vowed a world of nonsense on the subject. The habit of brooding over these ideas grew on me; I never heard a jest broken on my paternal guardian; I never caught the maudlin look of his reeling eyes, nor listened to some exquisite inanity from his besotted lips, but what my thoughts flew instantly back to the Sir Charleses and the Sir Roberts of my race, and I comforted myself with the hope that the present degeneracy should pass away. Hence, Julia, my family pride; hence too another feeling you dislike in me,—disdain! I first learned to despise my father, the host, and I then despised my

acquaintance, his guests; for I saw, while they laughed at him, that they flattered, and that their merriment was not the only thing suffered to feed at his expense. Thus contempt grew up with me, and I had nothing to check it; for when I looked around I saw not one living thing that I could respect. This father of mine had the sense to think I was no idiot. He was proud (poor man!) of 'my talents,' viz. of prizes won at school, and congratulatory letters from my masters. He sent me to college: my mind took a leap there: I will tell you, prettiest, what it was! Before I went thither, I had some fine, vague visions about virtue. I thought to revive my ancestral honour by being good: in short, I was an embryo King Pepin. I awoke from this dream at the university. There, for the first time, I perceived the real consequence of rank.

"At school, you know, Julia, boys care nothing for a lord. A good cricketer, an excellent fellow, is worth all the earls in the peerage. But at college all *that* ceases: bats and balls sink into the nothingness in which corals and bells had sunk before. One grows manly, and worships coronets and carriages. I saw it was a fine thing to get a prize, but it was ten times a finer thing to get drunk with a peer. So, when I had done the first, my resolve to be worthy of my sires made me do the second—not indeed exactly; I never got *drunk*; my father disgusted me with that vice betimes. To his gluttony I owe my vegetable diet; and to his inebriety my addiction to water. No—I did not get drunk with peers; but I was just as agreeable to them as if I had been equally imbruted. I knew intimately all the 'Hats' in the university, and I was henceforth looked up to by 'the Caps,' as if my head had gained the height of every hat that I knew. But I did not do this immediately. I must tell you two little anecdotes, that first initiated me into the secret of real greatness. The first is this: I was sitting at dinner with some fellows of a college, grave men and clever; two of them, not knowing me, were conversing about me: they heard, they said, that I should never be so good a fellow as my father,—have such a cellar, or keep such a house.

"'I have met six earls there and a marquis,' quoth the other senior.

"'And his son,' returned the first don, 'only keeps company with sizars, I believe.'

"‘So then,’ said I to myself, ‘to deserve the praise even of clever men, one must have good wines, know plenty of earls, and forswear sizars.’

"Nothing could be truer than my conclusion.

"Anecdote the second is this:—On the day I gained a high University prize, I invited my friends to dine with me: four of them refused, because they were engaged (they had been asked *since* I asked them)—to whom? the richest man at the University. These occurrences happening at the same time, threw me into a profound reverie: I awoke, and became a Man of the World. I no longer resolved to be virtuous, and to hunt after the glory of your Romans and your Athenians—I resolved to become rich, powerful, and of worldly repute.

"I abjured my honest sizars, and, as I said before, I courted some rich ‘Hats.’ Behold my first grand step in the world! I became the parasite and the flatterer. What! would my pride suffer this? verily, yes, my pride delighted in it; for it soothed my spirit of contempt, to put these fine fellows to my use! it soothed me to see how easily I could cajole them, and to what a variety of purposes I could apply even the wearisome disgust of their acquaintance. Nothing is so foolish as to say the idle great are of no use; they can be put to any use whatsoever that a wise man is inclined to make of them! Well, Julia, lo! my character already formed; family pride, disdain, and worldly ambition,—there it is for you:—after-circumstances only strengthened the impression already modelled. I desired, on leaving college, to go abroad; my father had no money to give me. What signified that? I looked carelessly round for some wealthier convenience than the paternal hoard; I found it in a Lord Mauleverer; he had been at college with me, and I endured him easily as a companion,—for he had accomplishments, wit, and good-nature; I made him wish to go abroad, and I made him think he should die of *ennui* if I did not accompany him. To his request to that effect, I *reluctantly* agreed, and saw every thing in Europe, which he neglected to see, at his expense. What amused me the most, was the perception, that I, the parasite, was respected by him, and he, the patron, was ridiculed by me! it would not have been so, if I had depended on ‘my virtue.’ Well, sweetest Julia, the world, as I have said, gave to my college experience a sacred authority. I returned to England, and my father

died, leaving to me not a sixpence, and to my brother an estate so mortgaged, that he could not enjoy it, and so restricted, that he could not sell it. It was now the time for me to profit by the experience I boasted of. I saw that it was necessary I should take some profession. Professions are the masks to your pauper-rogue; they give respectability to cheating, and a diploma to feed upon others. I analyzed my talents, and looked to the customs of my country; the result was, my resolution to take to the Bar. I had an inexhaustible power of application; I was keen, shrewd, and audacious. All these qualities 'tell' at the courts of justice. I kept my legitimate number of terms,—I was called,—I went the circuit,—I obtained not a brief—not a brief, Julia! my health, never robust, gave way beneath study and irritation; I was ordered to betake myself to the country; I came to this village, as one both salubrious and obscure. I lodged in the house of your aunt, you came thither daily,—I saw you,—you know the rest. But where, all this time, were my noble friends? you will say. 'Sdeath, since we had left college, they had learned a little of the wisdom I had *then* possessed; they were not disposed to give something for nothing; they had younger brothers and cousins, and mistresses, and, for aught I know, children to provide for. Besides, they had their own expenses; the richer a man is, the less he has to give. One of them would have bestowed on me a living, if I had gone in the church; another, a commission, if I had joined his regiment. But I knew the day was past both for priest and soldier; and it was not merely to live, no, nor to live comfortably, but to enjoy power, that I desired; so I declined these offers. Others of my friends would have been delighted to have kept me in their house, feasted me, joked with me, rode with me, and nothing more! But I had already the sense to see, that if a man dances himself into distinction, it is never by the steps of attendance. One must receive favours and court patronage, but it must be with the air of an independent man. My old friends thus rendered useless, my legal studies forbade me to make new, nay, they even estranged me from the old; for people may say what they please about a similarity of opinions being necessary to friendship, a similarity of habits is much more so. It is the man you dine, breakfast, and lodge with, walk, ride, gamble, or thief with, that is

your friend, not the man who likes Virgil as well as you do, and agrees with you in an admiration of Handel. Meanwhile, my chief prey, Lord Mauleverer, was gone; he had taken another man's Dulcinea, and sought out a bower in Italy; from that time to this, I have never heard of him nor seen him; I know not even his address. With the exception of a few stray gleanings from my brother, who, good easy man! I could plunder more, were I not resolved not to ruin the family stock, I have been thrown on myself; the result is, that though as clever as my fellows, I have narrowly shunned starvation; had my wants been less simple, there would have been no shunning in the case. But a man is not easily starved who drinks water, and eats by the ounce. A more effectual fate might have befallen me, disappointment, wrath, baffled hope, mortified pride, all these which gnawed at my heart, might have consumed it long ago, I might have fretted away as a garment, which the moth eateth, had it not been for that fund of obstinate and iron hardness, which nature—I beg pardon, there is no nature—*circumstance* bestowed upon me. This has borne me up, and will bear me yet through time, and shame, and bodily weakness, and mental fever, until my ambition has won a certain height, and my disdain of human pettiness rioted in the external sources of fortune, as well as an inward fountain of bitter and self-fed consolation. Yet oh, Julia, I know not even if this would have supported me, if at that epoch of life, when I was most wounded, most stricken in body, most soured in mind, my heart had not met and fastened itself to yours; I saw you, loved you, and life became to me a new object. Even now, as I write to you, all my bitterness, my pride, vanish; every thing I have longed for disappears; my very ambition is gone; I have no hope but for you, Julia,—beautiful, adored Julia;—when I love you, I love even my kind. Oh, you know not the power you possess over me. Do not betray it; you can yet make me all that my boyhood once dreamed; or you can harden every thought, feeling, sensation, into stone.

* * * *

“I was to tell you why I look not for happiness in our union. You have now seen my nature. You have traced the history of my life, by tracing the history of my character. You see what I surrender in gaining you.

I do not deny the sacrifice. I surrender the very essentials of my present mind and soul. I cease to be worldly, I cannot raise myself. I cannot revive my ancestral name; nay, I shall relinquish it for ever. I shall adopt a disguised appellation. I shall sink into another grade of life. In some remote village, by means of some humbler profession than that I now follow, we must earn our subsistence, and smile at ambition. I tell you frankly, Julia, when I close the eyes of my heart,—when I shut you from my gaze, this sacrifice appals me. But, even then, you force yourself before me, and I feel that one glance from your eye is more to me than all. If you could bear with me—if you could sooth me—if, when a cloud is on me, you could suffer it to pass away unnoticed, and smile on me the moment it is gone, O, Julia, there would then be no extreme of poverty—no abasement of fortune—no abandonment of early dreams which would not seem to me rapture, if coupled with the bliss of knowing that you are mine. Never should my lip—never should my eye tell you that there is that thing on earth for which I repine, or which I could desire. No, Julia, could I flatter my heart with this hope, you would not find me dream of unhappiness and you united. But I tremble, Julia, when I think of your temper and my own: you will conceive a gloomy look, from one never mirthful, is an insult; and you will feel every vent of passion on Fortune or on others, as a reproach to you. Then, too, you cannot enter into my nature; you cannot descend into its caverns; you cannot behold, much less can you deign to lull, the exacting and lynx-eyed jealousy that dwells there. Sweetest Julia, every breath of yours, every touch of yours, every look of yours I yearn for beyond all a mother's longing for the child that has been torn from her for years. Your head leaned upon an old tree—(do you remember it near * * *)—and I went every day after seeing you to kiss it. Do you wonder that I am jealous? How can I love you as I do, and be otherwise?—my whole being is intoxicated with you!

* * *

“This, then, your pride and mine—your pleasure in the admiration of others—your lightness, Julia, make me foresee an eternal and gushing source of torture to my mind.—I care not; I care for nothing so that you are mine, if but for one hour.”

VOL. II.—G

It seems that, despite the strange, sometimes the unlover-like and fiercely selfish nature of these letters from Brandon, something of a genuine tone of passion,—perhaps their originality,—aided, no doubt, by some uttered eloquence of the writer, and some treacherous inclination on the part of the mistress, ultimately conquered; and that a union, so little likely to receive the smile of a prosperous star, was at length concluded. The letter which terminated the correspondence was from Brandon: it was written on the evening before the marriage, which, it appeared by the same letter, was to be private and concealed. After a rapturous burst of hope and joy, it continued thus:

"Yes, Julia, I recant my words: I have no belief that you or I shall ever have cause hereafter for unhappiness. Those eyes that dwelt so tenderly on mine; that hand whose pressure lingers yet in every nerve of my frame; those lips turned so coyly—yet, shall I say, reluctantly?—from me—all tell me that you love me—and my fears are banished. Love, which conquered my nature, will conquer the only thing I would desire to see altered in yours. Nothing could ever make me adore you less, though you affect to dread it; nothing but a knowledge that you are unworthy of me—that you have a thought for another—then—then I should not hate you. No: the privilege of my past existence would revive; I should revel in a luxury of contempt—I should despise you—I should mock you, and I should be once more what I was before I knew you. But why do I talk thus? My bride, my blessing, forgive me."

In concluding our extracts from this correspondence, we wish the reader to note—first, that the love professed by Brandon seems of that vehement and corporeal nature which, while it is often the least durable, is also the most susceptible of the fiercest extremes of hatred, or even of disgust. Secondly, that the character opened by his sarcastic candour evidently required in a mistress either an utter devotion, or a skilful address. And thirdly, that we have hinted at such qualities in the fair correspondent as did not seem sanguinely to promise either of those essentials.

While with a curled, yet often with a quivering lip, the austere and sarcastic Brandon slowly compelled himself to the task of proceeding through these monuments

of former folly and youthful emotion, the farther elucidation of those events, now rapidly urging on a fatal and dread catastrophe, spreads before us a narrative occurring many years prior to the time at which we are at present arrived.

CHAPTER XV.

Clem. Lift the dark veil of years!—behind—what waits?
 A human heart.—Vast city, where reside
 All glories and all vilenesses!—while foul
 Yet silent through the roar of passions rolls
 The River of the Darling Sin—and bears
 A life and yet a poison on its tide.

* * * * *

Clem. Thy wife?—

Vict. Avaunt! I've chang'd that word to 'scorn!'

Clem. Thy child?

Vict. Ay, that strikes home—my child—my child!

LOVE AND HATE, &c.

To an obscure town in ——shire, there came to reside a young couple, whose appearance and habits drew towards them, from the neighbouring gossips, a more than ordinary attention. They bore the name of *Welford*. The man assumed the profession of a solicitor. He came without introduction or recommendation; his manner of life bespoke poverty; his address was reserved, and even sour; and despite the notice and scrutiny with which he was regarded, he gained no clients, and made no lawsuits. The want of all those decent *charlatanisms* which men of every profession are almost necessitated to employ, and the sudden and unusherred nature of his coming, were, perhaps, the cause of this ill-success. "His house was too small," people said, "for respectability." And little good could be got from a solicitor, the very rails round whose doors were so sadly in want of repainting! Then, too, Mrs. Welford made a vast number of enemies. She was, beyond all expression, beautiful; and there was a certain coquetry in her manner, which showed she was aware of her attractions. All the ladies of —— hated her. A few people called on the young couple. Welford received them coldly;

their invitations were unaccepted, and, what was worse, they were never returned. The Devil himself could not have supported an attorney under such circumstances. Reserved—shabby—poor—rude—introductionless—a bad house—an unpainted railing—and a beautiful wife! Nevertheless, though Welford was not engaged, he was, as we have said, watched. On their first arrival, which was in summer, the young pair were often seen walking together in the fields or groves which surrounded their home. Sometimes they walked affectionately together, and it was observed with what care Welford adjusted his wife's cloak or shawl around her slender shape, as the cool of the evening increased. But often his arm was withdrawn, he lingered behind—and they continued their walk, or returned homeward, in silence and apart. By degrees whispers circulated throughout the town, that the new-married couple lived by no means happily. The men laid the fault on the stern-looking husband; the women, on the minx of a wife. However, the solitary servant whom they kept declared, that though Mr. Welford did sometimes frown, and Mrs. Welford did sometimes weep, they were extremely attached to each other, and only quarrelled through love. The maid had had four lovers herself, and was possibly experienced in such matters. They received no visitors, near or from a distance; and the postman declared he had never seen a letter directed to either. Thus a kind of mystery hung over the pair, and made them still more gazed on, and still more disliked, which is saying a great deal, than they would have otherwise been. Poor as Welford was, his air and walk eminently bespoke what common persons term *gentility*. And in this he had greatly the advantage of his beautiful wife; who, though there was certainly nothing vulgar or plebeian in her aspect, altogether wanted the refinement of manner, look, and phrase, which characterized Welford. For about two years they lived in this manner, and so frugally and tranquilly, that though Welford had not any visible means of subsistence, no one could well wonder in what manner they *did* subsist. About the end of that time, Welford suddenly embarked a small sum in a county speculation. In the course of this adventure, to the great surprise of his neighbours, he evinced an extraordinary turn for calculation, and his habits plainly bespoke a

man both of business and ability. This disposal of capital brought a sufficient return to support the Welfords, if they had been so disposed, in rather a better style than heretofore. They remained, however, in much the same state; and the only difference that the event produced, was the retirement of Mr. Welford from the profession he had embraced. He was no longer a solicitor! It must be allowed that he resigned no great advantages in this retirement. About this time, some officers were quartered at —; and one of them, a handsome lieutenant, was so struck with the charms of Mrs. Welford, whom he saw at church, that he lost no opportunity of testifying his admiration. It was maliciously, yet not unfoundedly, remarked, that though no absolute impropriety could be detected in the manner of Mrs. Welford, she certainly seemed far from displeased with the evident homage of the young lieutenant. A blush tinged her cheek when she saw him; and the gallant coxcomb asserted, that the blush was not always without a smile. Emboldened by the interpretations of his vanity, and contrasting, as every one else did, his own animated face and glittering garb, with the ascetic and gloomy countenance, the unstudied dress, and austere gait, which destroyed in Welford the effect of a really handsome person, our Lieutenant thought fit to express his passion by a letter, which he conveyed to Mrs. Welford's pew. Mrs. Welford went not to church that day; the letter was found by a good-natured neighbour, and enclosed, anonymously, to the husband.

Whatever in the secrecy of domestic intercourse took place on this event was necessarily unknown; but the next Sunday, the face of Mr. Welford, which had never before appeared at church, was discerned by one vigilant neighbour,—probably the anonymous friend,—not in the same pew with his wife, but in a remote corner of the Sacred House. And once, when the Lieutenant was watching to read in Mrs. Welford's face some answer to his epistle, the same obliging inspector declared that Welford's countenance assumed a sardonic and withering sneer that made his very blood to creep. However this be, the Lieutenant left his quarters, and Mrs. Welford's reputation remained dissatisfactorily untarnished. Shortly after this, the county speculation failed, and it was understood that the Welfords were about to leave the town, whither none knew,—some said to jail; but

then, unhappily, no debtor could be discovered. Their bills had been "next to nothing," but at least they had been regularly paid. However, before the rumoured emigration took place, a circumstance equally wonderful to the good people of — occurred. One bright spring morning, a party of pleasure from a great house in the vicinity, passed through that town. Most conspicuous of these was a young horseman richly dressed, and of a remarkably showy and handsome appearance. Not a little sensible of the sensation he created, this cavalier lingered behind his group in order to eye more deliberately certain damsels stationed in a window, and who were quite ready to return his glances with interest. At this moment, the horse, which was fretting itself fiercely against the rein that restrained it from its fellows, took fright at a knifegrinder, started violently to one side, and the graceful cavalier, who had been thinking, not of the attitude best adapted to preserve his equilibrium, but to display his figure, was thrown with some force upon a heap of bricks and rubbish which had long, to the scandal of the neighbourhood, stood before the paintless railings around Mr. Welford's house. Welford himself came out at the time, and felt compelled, for he was by no means one whose sympathetic emotions flowed easily, to give a glance to the condition of a man who lay motionless before his very door. The horseman quickly recovered his senses, but found himself unable to rise; one of his legs was broken. Supported in the arms of his groom, he looked around, and his eye met Welford's. An instant recognition gave life to the face of the former, and threw a dark blush over the sullen features of the latter. "Heavens!" said the cavalier, "is that—" "Hist, my Lord!" cried Welford, quickly interrupting him, and glancing round. "But you are hurt—will you enter my house?"

The horseman signified his assent, and between the groom and Welford, was borne within the shabby door of the ex-solicitor. The groom was then despatched with an excuse to the party, many of whom were already hastening around the house; and though one or two did force themselves across the inhospitable threshold, yet so soon as they had uttered a few expletives, and felt their stare sink beneath the sullen and chilling asperity of the host, they satisfied themselves, that though it was damned unlucky for their friend, yet they could do no-

thing for him at present; and promising to send to inquire after him the next day, they remounted and rode homeward, with an eye more attentive than usual to the motion of their steeds. They did not however depart till the surgeon of the town had made his appearance, and declared that the patient must not on any account be moved. A lord's leg was a windfall that did not happen every day to the surgeon of —. All this while we may imagine the state of anxiety experienced in the town, and the agonized endurance of those rural nerves which are produced in scanty populations, and have so *Talicotian* a sympathy with the affairs of other people. One day—two days—three days—a week—a fortnight, nay, a month passed, and the lord was still the inmate of Mr. Welford's abode. Leaving the gossips to feed on their curiosity,—“Cannibals of their own hearts,”—we must give a glance towards the interior of the inhospitable mansion of the ex-solicitor.

It was towards evening, the sufferer was supported on a sofa, and the beautiful Mrs. Welford, who had officiated as his nurse, was placing the pillow under the shattered limb. He himself was attempting to seize her hand, which she coyly drew back; and uttering things sweeter and more polished than she had ever listened to before. At this moment, Welford softly entered; he was unnoticed by either; and he stood at the door contemplating them with a smile of calm and self-hugging derision. The face of Mephistophiles regarding Margaret and Faust, might suggest some idea of the picture we design to paint; but the countenance of Welford was more lofty (as well as comelier) in character, though not less malignant in expression than that which the incomparable Retsch has given to the mocking fiend. So utter, so congratulatory, so lordly was the contempt on Welford's dark and striking features, that though he was in that situation in which ridicule usually attaches itself to the husband, it was the gallant and the wife that would have appeared to the beholder in a humiliating and unenviable light.

After a momentary pause, Welford approached with a heavy step,—the wife started;—but with a bland and smooth expression, which since his sojourn in the town of — had been rarely visible in his aspect, the host joined the pair—smiled on the nurse, and congratulated the patient on his progress towards recovery. The

nobleman, well learned in the usages of the world, replied easily and gayly; and the conversation flowed on cheerfully enough, till the wife, who had sat abstracted and apart, stealing ever and anon timid glances towards her husband, and looks of a softer meaning towards the patient, retired from the room. Welford then gave a turn to the conversation: he reminded the nobleman of the pleasant days they had passed in Italy—of the adventures they had shared, and the intrigues they had enjoyed; as the conversation warmed, it assumed a more free and licentious turn; and not a little, we woen, would the good folks of —— have been amazed could they have listened to the gay jests and the libertine maxims which flowed from the thin lips of that cold and severe Welford, whose countenance gave the lie to mirth. Of women in general they spoke with that lively contempt which is the customary tone with men of the world,—only in Welford it assumed a bitterer, a deeper, and a more philosophical cast than it did in his more animated yet less energetic guest.

The nobleman seemed charmed with his friend; the conversation was just to his taste; and when Welford had supported him up to bed, he shook that person cordially by the hand, and hoped he should soon see him in very different circumstances. When the Peer's door was closed on Welford, he stood motionless for some moments; he then, with a soft step, ascended to his own chamber. His wife slept soundly; beside the bed was his infant's cradle. As his eyes fell on the latter, the rigid irony, now habitual to his features, relaxed, he bent over the cradle long, and in deep silence. The mother's face, blended with the sire's, was stamped on the sleeping and cherub countenance before him; and as, at length, rousing himself from his reverie, he kissed it gently, he murmured—

"When I look on you, I will believe that she once loved me—Pah!" he said abruptly, and rising,—"*this* fatherly sentiment for a ——'s offering is exquisite in me!" So saying, without glancing towards his wife, who, disturbed by the loudness of his last words, stirred uneasily, he left the room, and descended into that where he had conversed with his guest. He shut the door with caution, and striding to and fro the humble apartment, gave vent to thoughts marshalled somewhat in the broken array in which they now appear to the reader.

"Ay, ay, she has been my ruin! and if I were one of your weak fools who make a gospel of the silliest and most mawkish follies of this damnable social state, she would now be my disgrace; but, instead of my disgrace, I will make her my footstool to honour and wealth. And, then, to the devil with the footstool! Yes! two years I have borne what was enough to turn my whole blood into gall!—inactivity—hopelessness—a wasted heart and life in myself—contumely from the world, coldness, bickering, ingratitude, from the one for whom—Oh, ass that I was! I gave up the most cherished part of my nature, rather my nature itself! Two years I have borne this, and now will I have my revenge,—I will sell her—sell her—God! I will sell her like the commonest beast of a market! And this paltry piece of false coin shall buy me—my world! Other men's vengeance comes from hatred—a base, rash, unphilosophical sentiment! mine comes from scorn! the only wise state for the reason to rest in. Other men's vengeance ruins themselves—mine shall save me! Christ!—how my soul chuckles when I look at this pitiful pair, who think I see them not, and know that every movement they make is on a mesh of my web!—Yet," and Welford paused slowly,—“yet I cannot but mock myself when I think of the arch gull that this boy's madness, love,—love, indeed!—the very word turns me sick with loathing,—made of me. Had that woman, silly, weak, automatal, as she is, really loved me,—had she been sensible of the unspeakable sacrifice I had made to her—(Anthony's was nothing to it—he lost a real world only; mine was the world of imagination),—had she but condescended to learn my nature, to subdue the woman's devil at her own, I could have lived on in this babbling hermitage for ever, and fancied myself happy and resigned—I could have become a different being. I fancy I could have become what your moralists—(quacks!)—call ‘good.’ But this fretting frivolity of heart—this lust of fool's praise—this peevishness of temper—this sullenness in answer to the moody thought, which in me she neither fathomed nor forgave—this vulgar, daily, hourly pining at the paltry pinches of the body's poverty, the domestic whine, the household complaint,—when I—I have not a thought for such pitiful trials of affection; and all this while, my curses, my buried hope, and disguised spirit and sunken name not thought of; the magnitude of my

surrender to her not even comprehended; nay, her 'inconveniences,' a dim hearth, I suppose, or a daintyless table,—compared, ay, absolutely compared with all which I abandoned for her sake! As if it were not enough,—had I been a fool, an ambitionless, soulless fool,—the mere thought that I had linked my name to that of a tradesman—I beg pardon, a *retired* tradesman!—as if that knowledge,—a knowledge I would strangle my whole race, every one who has ever met, seen me, rather than they should penetrate, were not enough, when she talks of 'comparing,'—to make me gnaw the very flesh from my bones! No, no, no! Never was there so bright a turn in my fate, as when this titled coxcomb with his smooth voice and gaudy fripperies came hither! I will make her the tool to carve me out of this cavern wherein she has plunged me. I will foment 'my Lord's' passion, till 'my Lord' thinks 'the passion,'—(a butterfly's passion!)—worth any price. I will then make my own terms—bind my Lord to secrecy, and get rid of my wife, my shame, and the solicitorship of Mr. Welford for ever. Bright, bright prospects! let me shut my eyes to enjoy you! But softly, my noble friend calls himself a man of the world, skilled in human nature, and a derider of its prejudices; true enough, in his own little way—thanks not to enlarged views, but a vicious experience—so he is! The book of the world is a vast miscellany; he is perfectly well acquainted, doubtless, with those pages that treat of the fashions,—profoundly versed, I warrant, in the *Magasin des Modes* tacked to the end of the index. But shall I, even with all the mastership which my mind *must* exercise over his,—shall I be able utterly to free myself in this 'Peer of the world's' mind from a degrading remembrance? Cuckold, cuckold, 't is an ugly word; a convenient, willing cuckold, humph!—there is no grandeur, no philosophical varnish in the phrase. Let me see,—yes! I have a remedy for all that. I was married privately,—well! under disguised names,—well! it was a stolen marriage, far from her town,—well! witnesses unknown to her,—well! proofs easily secured to my possession,—excellent! the fool shall believe it a forged marriage, an ingenious gallantry of mine; I will wash out the stain cuckold, with the water of another word; I will make market of a mistress, not a *wife*. I will warn him not to acquaint *her* with this secret: let me

"consider for what reason,—oh! my son's legitimacy *may* be convenient to me hereafter. He will understand that reason, and I will have his 'honour' thereon. And, by-the-way, I do care for that legitimacy, and will guard the proofs; I love my child,—ambitious men do love their children; I may become a lord myself, and may wish for a lord to succeed me: and that son is mine; thank Heaven! I am sure on that point,—the only child too that ever shall arise to me. Never, I swear, will I again put myself beyond my own power! All my nature, save one passion, I have hitherto mastered, that passion shall henceforth be my slave, my only thought be ambition, my only desire the world!"

As thus terminated the reverie of a man whom the social circumstances of the world were calculated, as if by system, to render eminently and basely wicked, Welford slowly ascended the stairs, and re-entered his chamber,—his wife was still sleeping; her beauty was of the fair and girlish and harmonized order, which lovers and poets would express by the word "angelic," and as Welford looked upon her face, hushed and almost hallowed by slumber, a certain weakness and irresolution might have been discernible in the strong lines of his haughty features. At that moment, as if for ever to destroy the return of hope or virtue to either, her lips moved, they uttered one word,—it was the name of Welford's courtly guest.

About three weeks from that evening, Mrs. Welford eloped with the young nobleman, and on the morning following that event, the distracted husband with his child disappeared for ever from the town of —. From that day, no tidings whatsoever respecting him ever reached the titillated ears of his anxious neighbours; and doubt, curiosity, discussion, gradually settled into the belief that his despair had hurried him into suicide.

Although the unfortunate Mrs. Welford was in reality of a light and frivolous turn, and, above all, susceptible to personal vanity, she was not without ardent affections and keen sensibilities. Her marriage had been one of love, that is to say, on her part, the ordinary love of girls, who love not through actual and natural feeling, so much as a forced predisposition. Her choice had fallen on one superior to herself in birth, and far above all in person and address whom she had habitually met. Thus her vanity had assisted her affection, and some-

thing strange and eccentric in the temper and mind of Welford, had, though at times it aroused her fear, greatly contributed to inflame her imagination. Then, too, though an uncourtly, he had been a passionate and a romantic lover. She was sensible that he gave up for her much that he had previously conceived necessary to his existence; and she stopped not to inquire how far this devotion was likely to last, or what conduct on her part might best perpetuate the feelings from which it sprung. She had eloped with him. She had consented to a private marriage. She had passed one happy month, and then delusion vanished! Mrs. Welford was not a woman who could give to reality, or find in it, the charm equal to-delusion. She was perfectly unable to comprehend the intricate and dangerous character of her husband. She had not the key to his virtues, or the spell for his vices. Nor was the state to which poverty compelled them, one well calculated for that tender meditation, heightened by absence and cherished in indolence, which so often supplies one who loves with the secret to the nature of the one beloved. Though not equal to her husband in birth or early prospects, Mrs. Welford had been accustomed to certain comforts, often more felt by those who belong to the inferior classes than by those appertaining to the more elevated, who, in losing one luxury, will often cheerfully surrender all. A fine lady can submit to more hardships than her woman; and every gentleman who travels, smiles at the privations which agonize his valet. Poverty, and its grim comrades, made way for a whole host of petty irritations and peevish complaints; and as no guest or visiter ever relieved the domestic discontent, or broke on the domestic bickering, they generally ended in that moody sullenness which so often finds love a grave in repentance. Nothing makes people tire of each other, like a familiarity that admits of carelessness in quarrelling, and coarseness in complaining. The biting sneer of Welford gave acrimony to the murmur of his wife; and when once each conceived the other the injurer, or him or herself the wronged, it was vain to hope that one would be more wary, or the other more indulgent. They both exacted too much, and the wife in especial conceded too little. Mrs. Welford was altogether and emphatically what a libertine calls—"a woman,"—such is a frivolous education makes a woman,—generous in

great things, petty in small, vain, irritable, full of the littleness of herself and her complaints, ready to plunge into an abyss with her lover, but equally ready to fret away all love with reproaches when the plunge had been made. Of all men, Welford could bear this the least. A woman of a larger heart, a more settled experience, and an intellect capable of appreciating his character, and sounding all his qualities, might have made him perhaps a useful and a great man; and at least *her* lover for life. Amid a harvest of evil feelings, the mere strength of his nature rendered him especially capable of intense feeling and generous emotion. One who relied on him was safe,—one who rebelled against him, trusted only to the caprice of his scorn. Still, however, for two years, love, though weakening with each hour, fought on in either breast, and could scarcely be said to be entirely vanquished in the *wife*, even when she eloped with her handsome seducer. A French writer has said, pithily enough, “Compare for a moment the apathy of a husband with the attention, the gallantry, the adoration of a lover, and *can* you ask the result?” He was a *French* writer; but Mrs. Welford had in her temper much of the French woman. A suffering patient, young, handsome, well versed in the arts of intrigue, contrasted with a gloomy husband whom she had never comprehended, long feared, and had lately doubted if she disliked;—ah! a much weaker contrast has made many a much better woman food for the lawyers! Mrs. Welford eloped; but she felt a revived tenderness for her husband on the very morning that she did so. She carried away with her his letters of love as well as her own, which when they first married she had, in an hour of fondness, collected together—*then* an inestimable hoard!—and never did her new lover receive from her beautiful lips half so passionate a kiss as she left on the cheek of her infant. For some months she enjoyed with her paramour all for which she had sighed in her home. The one for whom she had forsaken her legitimate ties, was a person so habitually cheerful, courteous, and what is ordinarily termed good-natured (though he had in him as much of the essence of selfishness as any nobleman can decently have), that he continued gallant to her without an effort, long after he had begun to think it possible to tire even of so lovely a face. Yet there were moments when the fickle wife recalled her husband with

regret; and, contrasting him with her seducer, did not find all the colourings of the contrast flattering to the latter. There is something in a powerful and marked character, which women, and all weak natures, feel themselves constrained to respect; and Welford's character thus stood in bold, and therefore advantageous, though gloomy, relief when opposed to the levities and foibles of this guilty woman's present adorer. However this be, the die was cast; and it would have been policy for the lady to have made the best of her present game. But she who had murmured as a wife, was not complaisant as a mistress. Reproaches made an interlude to caresses, which the noble lover by no means admired. He was not a man to retort, he was too indolent; but neither was he one to forbear. "My charming friend," said he one day, after a scene, "you weary of me,—nothing more natural! Why torment each other? You say I have ruined you; my sweet friend, let me make you reparation—become independent; I will settle an annuity upon you; fly me—seek happiness elsewhere, and leave your unfortunate, your despairing lover to his fate."

"Do you taunt me, my Lord?" cried the angry fair; "or do you believe that money can replace the rights of which you have robbed me?—can you make me again a wife—a happy, a respected wife? Do this, my Lord, and you atone to me!"

The nobleman smiled and shrugged his shoulders. The lady yet more angrily repeated her question. The lover answered by an inuendo, which at once astonished and doubly enraged her. She eagerly demanded explanation; and his Lordship, who had gone farther than he intended, left the room. But his words had sunk deep into the breast of this unhappy woman, and she resolved to procure an elucidation. Agreeably to the policy which stripped the fabled traveller of his cloak, she laid aside the storm, and preferred the sunshine: she watched a moment of tenderness, turned the opportunity to advantage, and by little and little, she possessed herself of a secret which sickened her with shame, disgust, and dismay. Sold! bartered! the object of a contemptuous huxtering to the purchaser and the seller; sold, too, with a lie that debased her at once into an object for whom even pity was mixed with scorn. Robbed already of the name and honour of a wife, and transferred, as a harlot,

from the wearied arms of one leman, to the capricious caresses of another. Such was the image that rose before her; and while it roused at one moment all her fiercer passions into madness, humbled, with the next, her vanity into the dust. She, who knew the ruling passion of Welford, saw, at a glance, the object of scorn and derision which she had become to him. While she imagined herself the betrayer, she had been the betrayed; she saw vividly before her (and shuddered as she saw) her husband's icy smile—his serpent eye—his features steeped in sarcasm, and all his mocking soul stamped upon the countenance, whose lightest derision was so galling. She turned from this picture, and saw the courtly face of the purchaser—his subdued smile at her reproaches—his latent sneer at her claims to a station which he had been taught, by the arch plotter, to believe she had never possessed. She saw his early weariness of her attractions, expressed with respect indeed—an insulting respect,—but felt without a scruple of remorse. She saw in either—as around—only a reciprocation of contempt. She was in a web of profound abasement. Even that haughty grief of conscience for crime committed to another, which, if it stings, humbles not, was swallowed up in a far more agonizing sensation, to one so vain as the adulteress—the burning sense of shame at having herself, while sinning, been the duped and deceived. Her very soul was appalled with her humiliation. The curse of Welford's vengeance was on her—and it was wreaked to the last! Whatever kindly sentiment she might have experienced towards her protector, was swallowed at once by this discovery. She could not endure the thought of meeting the eye of one who had been the gainer by this ignominious barter. The foibles and weaknesses of the lover assumed a despicable as well as hateful die. And in feeling *herself* degraded, she loathed *him*. The day after she had made the discovery we have referred to, Mrs. Welford left the house of her protector, none knew whither. For two years from that date, all trace of her history was lost. At the end of that time, what was Welford? a man rapidly rising in the world, distinguished at the Bar, where his first brief had lifted him into notice, commencing a flattering career in the Senate, holding lucrative and honourable offices, esteemed for the austere rectitude of his moral character, gathering the golden opinions of all

men, as he strode onward to public reputation. He had reassumed his hereditary name; his early history was unknown; and no one in the obscure and distant town of — had ever guessed that the humble Welford was the William Brandon whose praise was echoed in so many journals, and whose rising genius was acknowledged by all. That asperity, roughness, and gloom, which had noted him at —, and which, being natural to him, he deigned not to disguise in a station ungenial to his talents and below his hopes, were now glitteringly varnished over by an hypocrisy well calculated to aid his ambition. So learnedly could this singular man fit himself to others, that few among the great met him as a companion, nor left him without the temper to become his friend. Through his noble rival, that is—(to make our reader's 'surety doubly sure')—through Lord Mauteverer, he had acquired his first lucrative office, a certain patronage from government, and his seat in parliament. If he had persevered at the Bar, rather than given himself entirely to state intrigues, it was only because his talents were eminently more calculated to advance him in the former path to honour, than in the latter. So devoted was he become to public life, that he had only permitted himself to cherish one private source of enjoyment,—his son. As no one, not even his brother, knew he had been married,—(during the two years of his disguised name, he had been supposed abroad,)—the appearance of this son made the only piece of scandal whispered against the rigid morality of his fair fame; but he himself, waiting his own time for avowing a legitimate heir, gave out that it was the orphan child of a dear friend whom he had known abroad; and the Puritan demureness not only of life, but manner, which he assumed, gained a pretty large belief to the statement. This son Brandon idolized. As we have represented himself to say,—ambitious men are commonly fond of their children, beyond the fondness of other sires. The perpetual reference the ambitious make to posterity, is perhaps the main reason. But Brandon was also fond of children generally, philoprogenitiveness was a marked trait in his character, and would seem to belie the hardness and artifice belonging to that character, were not the same love so frequently noticeable in the harsh and the artificial. It seems as if a half-conscious but pleasing feeling, that *they* too were once gentle and innocent, make

them delight in reviving any sympathy with their early state.

Often after the applause and labour of the day, Brandon would repair to his son's chamber, and watch his slumber for hours; often before his morning toil commenced, he would nurse the infant in his arms with all a woman's natural tenderness and gushing joy. And often, as a graver and more characteristic sentiment stole over him, he would mentally say,—“You shall build up our broken name on a better foundation than your sire. I begin too late in life, and I labour up a painful and stony road; but I shall make the journey to Fame smooth and accessible for you. Never, too, while you aspire to honour, shall you steel your heart to tranquillity. For you, my child, shall be the joys of home, and love, and a mind that does not sicken at the past, and strain, through mere fretfulness, towards a solitary and barren distinction for the future. Not only what your father gains, you shall enjoy, but what has cursed him, his vigilance shall lead you to shun!”

It was thus not only that his softer feelings, but all the better and nobler ones which, even in the worst and hardest bosom, find some root, turned themselves towards his child; and that the hollow and vicious man promised to become the affectionate and perhaps the wise parent.

One night, Brandon was returning home from a ministerial dinner. The night was frosty and clear, the hour was late, and his way lay through the longest and best-lighted street of the metropolis. He was, as usual, buried in thought, when he was suddenly aroused from his reverie by a light touch laid on his arm. He turned, and saw one of the unhappy persons who haunt the midnight streets of cities, standing right before his path. The gaze of each fell full upon the other; and it was thus, for the first time since they laid their heads on the same pillow, that the Husband met the Wife. The skies were intensely clear, and the lamp-light was bright and calm upon the faces of both. There was no doubt in the mind of either. Suddenly, and with a startled and ghastly consciousness, they recognised each other. The wife staggered, and clung to a post for support: Brandon's look was calm and unmoved. The hour that his bitter and malignant spirit had yearned for was come: his nerves expanded in a voluptuous calmness, as if to give him a deliberate enjoyment of his hope fulfilled. What-

ever the words that, in that unwitnessed and almost awful interview, passed between them, we may be sure that Brandon spared not one atom of his power. The lost and abandoned wife returned home, and all her nature, imbruted as it had become by guilt and vile habits, hardened into revenge that preternatural feeling which may be termed the hope of despair.

Three nights from that meeting, Brandon's house was broken into. Like the houses of many legal men, it lay in a dangerous and thinly populated outskirts of the town, and was easily accessible to robbery. He was awakened by a noise; he started, and found himself in the grasp of two men. At the foot of the bed stood a female, raising a light, and her face, haggard with searing passions, and ghastly with the leprous whiteness of disease and approaching death, glared full upon him.

"It is now *my* turn," said the female, with a grin of scorn which Brandon himself might have envied—"you have cursed me, and I return the curse! You have told me that my child shall never name me but to blush. Fool! I triumph over you: *you* he shall never know to his dying-day! You have told me, that to my child and my child's child (a long transmission of execration), my name—the name of the wife you basely sold to ruin and to hell, should be left as a legacy of odium and shame! Man, you shall teach that child no farther lesson whatever: you shall know not whether he live or die, or have children to carry on your boasted race; or whether, if he have, those children be not the outcasts of the earth—the accursed of man and God—the fit offspring of the thing you have made me. Wretch! I hurl back on you the denunciation with which, when we met three nights since, you would have crushed the victim of your own perfidy. You shall tread the path of your ambition childless, and objectless, and hopeless. Disease shall set her stamp upon your frame. The worm shall batten upon your heart. You shall have honours, and enjoy them not: you shall gain your ambition, and despair: you shall pine for your son, and find him not; or, if you find him, you shall curse the hour in which he was born. Mark me, man—I am dying while I speak—I know that I am a prophet in my curse. From this hour I am avenged, and *you* are my scorn!"

As the hardest natures sink appalled before the stony eye of the maniac, so, in the dead of the night, pinioned

by ruffians, the wild and solemn voice (sharpened by passion and partial madness) of the ghastly figure before him curdling through his veins, even the haughty and daring character of William Brandon quailed! He uttered not a word. He was found the next morning, bound by strong cords to his bed. He spoke not when he was released, but went in silence to his child's chamber;—the child was gone! Several articles of property were also stolen: the desperate tools the mother had employed worked not perhaps without their own reward.

We need scarcely add, that Brandon set every engine and channel of justice in motion for the discovery of his son. All the especial shrewdness and keenness of his own character, aided by his professional experience, he employed for years in the same pursuit. Every research was wholly in vain: not the remotest vestige towards discovery could be traced, until were found (we have recorded when) some of the articles that had been stolen. Fate treasured in her gloomy womb, altogether undescried by man, the hour and the scene in which the most ardent wish of William Brandon was to be realized.

CHAPTER XVI.

*O Fortuna, viris invida fortibus
Quam non æqua bonis præmia dividis.*

SENECA.

• • • • •
And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew.

• • • • •
Here, to the houseless child of want,
My door is open still.

GOLDSMITH.

SLOWLY, for Lucy, waned the weeks of a winter, which, to her, was the most dreary portion of life she had ever passed. It became the time for the Judge to attend one of those periodical visitations so fraught with dread and dismay to the miserable inmates of the dark abodes which the complex laws of this country so bounteously supply—those times of great hilarity and eating to the legal gentry,

"Who feed on crime and fatten on distress,
And wring vile mirth from suffering's last excess."

Ah! excellent order of the world, which it is so wicked to disturb! How miraculously beautiful must be that system which makes wine out of the scorching tears of guilt; and from the suffocating suspense, the agonized fear, the compelled and self-mocking bravery, the awful sentence, the despairing death-pang of one man, furnishes the smirking expectation of fees, the jovial meeting, and the mercenary holyday to another! "Of law, nothing less can be said, than that her seat is the bosom of God."* To be sure not, Richard Hooker, you are perfectly right. The divinity of a sessions, and the inspiration of the Old Bailey, are undeniable!

The care of Sir William Brandon had effectually kept from Lucy's ear the knowledge of her lover's ignominious situation. Indeed, in her delicate health, even the hard eye of Brandon, and the thoughtless glance of Mauleverer, perceived the danger of such a discovery. The Earl now waiting the main attack on Lucy, till the curtain had for ever dropped on Clifford, proceeded with great caution and delicacy in his suit to his purposed bride. He waited with the more patience, inasmuch as he had drawn in advance on his friend Sir William for some portion of the heiress's fortune; and he readily allowed that he could not, in the mean while, have a better advocate than he found in Brandon. So persuasive, indeed, and so subtle was the eloquence of this able sophist, that often, in his artful conversations with his niece, he left even on the unvitiated and strong, though simple, mind of Lucy an easy and restless impression, which time might have ripened into an inclination towards the worldly advantages of the marriage at her command. Brandon was no bungling mediator or violent persecutor. He seemed to acquiesce in her rejection of Mauleverer. He scarcely recurred to the event. He rarely praised the Earl himself, save for the obvious qualities of liveliness and good-nature. But he spoke with all the vivid colours he could infuse at will into his words, of the pleasures and the duties of rank and wealth. Well could he appeal alike to all the prejudices and all the foibles of the human breast, and govern virtue through its weaknesses. Lucy had been brought

* Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity.

up, like the daughters of most country gentlemen of ancient family, in an undue and idle consciousness of superior birth; and she was far from inaccessible to the warmth and even feeling (for *here* Brandon was sincere) with which her uncle spoke of the duty of raising a gallant name sunk into disrepute, and sacrificing our own inclinations, for the redecoration of the mouldered splendour of those who have gone before us. If the confusion of idea occasioned by a vague pomposity of phrase, and the infant inculcation of a sentiment that is mistaken for a virtue, so often makes fools of the wise on the subject of ancestry; if it clouded even the sarcastic and keen sense of Brandon himself, we may forgive its influence over a girl so little versed in the arts of sound reasoning as poor Lucy, who, it may be said, had never learned to think until she had learned to love. However, the impression made by Brandon, in his happiest moments of persuasion, was as yet only transient: it vanished before the first thought of Clifford, and never suggested to her even a doubt as to the suit of Mauleverer.

When the day arrived for Sir William Brandon to set out on the circuit, he called Barlow, and enjoined that acute and intelligent servant the strictest caution with respect to Lucy. He bade him deny her to every one of whatever rank, and carefully to look into every newspaper that was brought to her, as well as to withhold every letter, save such as were addressed to her in the Judge's own handwriting. Lucy's maid Brandon had already won over to silence; and the uncle now pleased himself with thinking that he had put an effectual guard to every chance of discovery. The identity of Lovett with Clifford had not yet even been rumoured, and Mauleverer had rightly judged of Clifford, when he believed the prisoner would himself take every precaution against the detection of that fact. Clifford answered the Earl's note and promise, in a letter couched in so affecting yet so manly a tone of gratitude, that even Brandon was touched when he read it. And since his confinement and partial recovery of health, the prisoner had kept himself closely secluded, and refused all visitors. Encouraged by this reflection, and the belief in the safety of his precautions, Brandon took leave of Lucy. "Farewell!" said he, as he embraced her affectionately. "Be sure that you write to me, and forgive me if I do not

answer you punctually. Take care of yourself, my sweet niece, and let me see a fresher colour on that soft cheek when I return!"

"Take care of yourself rather, my dear, dear uncle," said Lucy, clinging to him and weeping, as of late her weakened nerves caused her to do at the least agitation. "Why may I not go with you? You have seemed to me paler than usual, the last three or four days, and you complained yesterday. Do let me go with you; I will be no trouble, none at all; but I am sure you require a nurse."

"You want to frighten me, my pretty Lucy," said Brandon, shaking his head, with a smile. "I am well, very well: I felt a strange rush of blood towards the head yesterday, it is true; but I feel to-day stronger and lighter than I have done for years. Once more, God bless you, my child!" And Brandon tore himself away, and commenced his journey.

The wandering and dramatic course of our story now conducts us to an obscure lane in the metropolis, leading to the Thames, and makes us spectators of an affecting farewell between two persons, whom the injustice of fate, and the persecutions of men, were about perhaps for ever to divide.

"Adieu, my friend!" said Augustus Tomlinson, as he stood looking full on that segment of the face of Edward Pepper, which was left unconcealed by a huge hat and a red belcher handkerchief. Tomlinson himself was attired in the full costume of a dignified clergyman. "Adieu, my friend, since you *will* remain in England,—adieu! I am, I exult to say, no less sincere a patriot than you. Heaven be my witness, how long I looked repugnantly on poor Lovett's proposal, to quit my beloved country. But all hope of life *here*, is now over; and really, during the last ten days, I have been so hunted from corner to corner, so plagued with polite invitations, similar to those given by a farmer's wife to her ducks, 'Dilly, dilly, dilly, come and be killed!' that my patriotism has been prodigiously cooled, and I no longer recoil from the thoughts of self-banishment. 'The earth,' my dear Ned, as a Greek sage has very well observed,—'the earth is the same every where!' and if I am asked for my home, I can point, like Anaxagoras, to Heaven!"

"'Pon my soul, you affect me!" said Ned, speaking thick, either from grief or the pressure of the belcher

handkerchief on his mouth; "it is quite beautiful to hear you talk!"

"Bear up, my dear friend," continued Tomlinson, "bear up against your present afflictions. What, to a man who fortifies himself by reason and by reflection on the shortness of life, are the little calamities of the body? What is imprisonment, or persecution, or cold, or hunger?—By-the-by, you did not forget to put the sandwiches into my coat-pocket?"

"Hush!" whispered Ned, and he moved on involuntarily; "I see a man at the other end of the street."

"Let us quicken our pace," said Tomlinson; and the pair proceeded towards the river.

"And now," began Ned, who thought he might as well say something about himself, for hitherto Augustus, in the ardour of his friendship, had been only discussing his own plans;—"and now,—that is to say, when I leave you,—I shall hasten to dive for shelter, until the storm blows over. I don't much like living in a cellar and wearing a smock-frock,—but those concealments have something interesting in them, after all! the safest and snuggest place I know of, is the *Pays Bas*, about Thames Court; so I think of hiring an apartment under-ground, and taking my meals at poor Lovett's old quarters, the 'Mug,'—the police will never dream of looking in those vulgar haunts, for a man of my fashion."

"You cannot then tear yourself from England?" said Tomlinson.

"No, hang it! the fellows are so cursed unmanly on the other side of the water. I hate their wine and their *Parley woo*. Besides, there is no fun there!"

Tomlinson, who was absorbed in his own thoughts, made no comment on his friend's excellent reasons against travel, and the pair now approached the brink of the river. A boat was in waiting to receive and conduct to the vessel in which he had taken his place for Calais, the illustrious emigrant. But as Tomlinson's eye fell suddenly on the rude boatman and the little boat, which were to bear him away from his native land; as he glanced too across the blue waters, which a brisk wind wildly agitated, and thought how much rougher it would be at sea, where "his soul" invariably "sickened at the heaving wave," a whole tide of deep and sorrowful emotions rushed upon him.

He turned away:—the spot on which he stood was a

piece of ground to be let (as a board proclaimed) upon a building lease; below, descended the steps which were to conduct him to the boat; around, the desolate and houseless space allowed him to see, in far and broad extent, the spires, and domes, and chimneys of the great city whose inhabitants he might never plunder more. As he looked and looked, the tears started to his eyes, and with a gust of enthusiasm little consonant with his temperate and philosophical character, he lifted his right hand from his black breeches-pocket, and burst into the following farewell to the metropolis of his native shores.

"Farewell, my beloved London, farewell! Where shall I ever find a city like you? Never, till now, did I feel how inexpressibly dear you were to me. You have been my father, and my brother, and my mistress, and my tailor, and my shoemaker, and my hatter, and my cook, and my wine merchant! You and I never misunderstood each other. I did not grumble when I saw what fine houses and good strong boxes you gave to other men. No! I rejoiced at their prosperity. I delighted to see a rich man—my only disappointment was in stumbling on a poor one. You gave riches to my neighbours; but, O generous London, you gave those neighbours to me! Magnificent streets, all Christian virtues abide within you! Charity is as common as smoke! Where, in what corner of the habitable world shall I find human beings with so many superfluities? where shall I so easily decoy from their benevolent credulity, those superfluities to myself? God only knows, my dear, dear, darling London, what I lose in you! O public charities!—O public institutions!—O Banks that belie mathematical axioms, and make lots out of nothing!—O show-rooms where Frenchmen are expected to drink prussic acid like water!—O merciful spectators, who pursue the said Frenchmen to coal-holes, if they refuse to be poisoned!—O ancient constitution always to be questioned!—O modern improvements that never answer!—O speculations!—O companies!—O usury laws which guard against usurers, by making as many as possible!—O churches in which no one profits, save the parson, and the old women that let pews of an evening!—O superb theatres, too small for parks, too enormous for houses, which exclude comedy and comfort, and have a monopoly for performing nonsense gigantically!—O houses of plaster built in a day!—O palaces four

yards high, with a dome in the middle, meant to be invisible!*—O shops worth thousands, and O shopkeepers not worth a shilling!—O system of credit, by which beggars are princes, and princes are beggars!—O imprisonment for debt, which lets the mare be stolen, and then locks up the bridle!—O sharpers, bubbles, senators, beaux, taverns, brothels, clubs, houses private and public!—O London, in a word, receive my last adieu! Long may you flourish in peace and plenteousness! may your knaves be witty, and your fools be rich! May you alter only two things—your damnable tricks of transportation and hanging! Those are your sole faults; but for those, I would never desert you.—Adieu!"

Here Tomlinson averted his head, and then hastily shaking the hand of Long Ned with a tremulous and warm grasp, he hurried down the stairs and entered the boat. Ned remained motionless for some moments, following him with his eyes, as he sat at the end of the boat, waving a white pocket-handkerchief. At length, a line of barges snatched him from the sight of the lingerer, and Ned, slowly turning away, muttered—"Yes, I have always heard that Dame Lobkins's was the safest asylum for misfortune like mine. I will go forthwith in search of a lodging, and to-morrow I will make my breakfast at the 'Mug!'"

Be it our pleasing task, dear reader, to *forestall* the good robber, and return, at the hour of sunrise on the day following Tomlinson's departure, to the scene at which our story commenced. We are now once more at the house of Mrs. Margery Lobkins.

The room which served so many purposes was still the same as when Paul turned it into the arena of his mischievous pranks. The dresser, with its shelves of mingled delf and pewter, occupied its ancient and important station. Only it might be noticed that the pewter was more dull than of yore, and that sundry cracks made their erratic wanderings over the yellow surface of the delf. The eye of the mistress had become less keen than heretofore, and the care of the handmaid had, of necessity, relaxed. The tall clock still ticked in mono

* We must not suppose this apostrophe to be an anachronism! Tomlinson, of course, refers to some palace of his day. One of the boxes—Christmas boxes—given to the king by his economical nation of shopkeepers. We suppose it is either pulled down or blown down long ago: it is doubtless forgotten by this time, except by antiquaries. Nothing is so ephemeral as great houses built by the people—Your Kings play the deuce with their play-things!

tonous warning; the blanket-skreen, haply innocent of soap since we last described it, many-storied, poly-bal-laded, still unfolded its ample leaves "rich with the spoils of time." The spit and the musket yet hung from the wall in amicable proximation. And the long smooth form, "with many a holy text *thereon bestrewn*," still afforded rest to the weary traveller, and an object to the vacant stare of Mrs. Margery Lobkins, as she lolled in her opposite seat and forgot the world. But poor Piggy Lob! *there* was the alteration! The soul of the woman was gone! The spirit had evaporated from the human bottle! She sat with open mouth and glassy eye in her chair, sidling herself to and fro, with the low, peevish sound of fretful age, and bodily pain, sometimes this querulous murmur sharpened into a shrill but unmeaning scold. "There now, you gallows-bird, you has taken the swipes without chalking; you wants to cheat the poor widow; but I sees you, I does! Providence protects the aged and the innocent—oh, oh! these twinges will be the death o' me! Where's Martha! You jade, you! you wiperous hussey, bring the tape here, does n't you see how I suffers? Has you no bowels, to let a poor Christin cretur perish for want o' help! That 's the way with 'em, that 's the way! No one cares for I now—no one has respect for the gray 'airs of the old!" And then the voice dwindled into the whimpering "tenor of its way." Martha, a strapping wench, with red hair streaming over her "hills of snow," was not, however, inattentive to the wants of her mistress. "Who knows," said she to a man who sat by the hearth, drinking tea out of a blue mug, and toasting with great care two or three huge rounds of bread, for his own private and especial nutriment—"who knows," said she, "what we may come to ourselves?" and, so saying, she placed a glowing tumbler by her mistress's elbow. But in the sunken prostration of her intellect, the old woman was insensible even to her consolation: she sipped and drank, it is true; but, as if the stream warmed not the benumbed region through which it passed, she continued muttering, in a crazed and groaning key, "Is this your gratitude, you serpent! why does not you bring the tape I tells you! Am I of a age to drink water like a oss, you nasty thing! Oh, to think as ever I should live to be deserted!"

Inattentive to these murmurs, which she felt unreasonable, the bouncing Martha now quitted the room, to

repair to her "upper household" avocations. The man at the hearth was the only companion left to the widow. Gazing at her for a moment, as she sat whining, with a rude compassion in his eye, and slowly munching his toast which he had now buttered, and placed in a delf plate on the hob, this person thus soothingly began—

"Ah, Dame Lobkins, if so be as ow little Paul vas a vith you, it vould be a gallows comfort to you in your latter hend!"

The name of Paul made the good woman incline her head towards the speaker; a ray of consciousness shot through her bedulled brain.

"Little Paul, eh, sirs! where is Paul? Paul, I say, my ben-cull. Alack! he's gone—left his poor old nurse to die like a cat in a cellar. Oh, Dummie! never live to be old, man! They leaves us to ourself, and then takes away all the lush with 'em! I has not a drop o' comfort in the varsal world!"

Dummie, who at this moment had his own reasons for soothing the dame, and was anxious to make the most of the opportunity of a conversation as unwitnessed as the present, replied tenderly; and with a cunning likely to promote his end, reproached Paul bitterly for never having informed the dame of his whereabouts and his proceedings. "But come, dame," he wound up, "come, I knows as how he is better nor all that, and that you need not beat your hold brains to think where he lies, or vot he's a doing. Blow me tight, mother Lob,—I ax pardon, Mrs. Margery, I should say,—if I vould not give five bob, ay, and five to the tail o' that, to know vot the poor lad is about; I takes a mortal hinterest in that 'ere chap!"

"Oh! oh!" groaned the old woman, on whose palsied sense the astute inquiries of Dummie Dunnaker fell harmless; "my poor sinful carcass! what a way it be in!"

Artfully again did Dummie Dunnaker, nothing defeated, renew his attack; but fortune does not always favour the wise, and it failed Dummie now, for a twofold reason: first, because it was not possible for the dame to comprehend him; secondly, because, even if it had been, she had nothing to reveal. Some of Clifford's pecuniary gifts had been conveyed anonymously, *all* without direction or date; and, for the most part, they had been appropriated by the sage Martha, into whose hands they fell, to her own private uses. Nor did the dame

require Clifford's grateful charity; for she was a woman tolerably well off in this world, considering how near she was waxing to another. Longer, however, might Dummie have tried his unavailing way, had not the door of the inn creaked on its hinges, and the bulky form of a tall man in a smock-frock, but with a remarkably fine head of hair, darkened the threshold. He honoured the dame, who cast on him a lack-lustre eye, with a sulky, yet ambrosial nod, seized a bottle of spirits and a tumbler, lighted a candle, drew a small German pipe and a tobacco-box from his pouch, placed these several luxuries on a small table, wheeled it to a far corner of the room, and, throwing himself into one chair, and his legs into another, he enjoyed the result of his pains in a moody and supercilious silence. Long and earnestly did the meek Dummie gaze on the face of the gentleman before him. It had been some years since he had last beheld it; but it was one which did not easily escape the memory; and although its proprietor was a man who had risen in the world, and gained the height of his profession (a station far beyond the diurnal sphere of Dummie Dunnaker), and the humble purloiner was, therefore, astonished to encounter him in these lower regions; yet Dummie's recollection carried him back to a day when they had gone shares together without respect of persons, and been right jolly partners in the practical game of beggar my neighbour. While, however, Dummie Dunnaker, who was a little inclined to be shy, deliberated as to the propriety of claiming acquaintanceship, a dirty boy, with a face which betokened the frost, as Dummie himself said, like a plum dying of the scarlet fever, entered the room, with a newspaper in his dexter paw. "Great news—great news!" cried the urchin, imitating his vociferous originals in the street; "all about the famous Captain Lovett, as large as life!"

"'Old your blarney, you blattergrowl!" said Dummie, rebukingly, and seizing the journal.

"Master says as how he must have it to send to Clapham, and can't spare it for more than a 'our!'" said the boy as he withdrew.

"I'members the day," said Dummie, with the zeal of a clansman, "when the Mug took a paper all to itself, instead of 'iring it by the job like!"

Thereon he opened the paper with a fillip, and gave himself up to the lecture. But the tall stranger, half rising with a start, exclaimed, "Can't you have the man-

ners to be communicative?—do you think nobody cares about Captain Lovett but yourself?"

On this, Dummie turned round on his chair, and, with a "Blow me tight, you 're velcome, I'm sure!" began as follows:—(we copy the paper, not the diction of the reader.)

"The trial of the notorious Lovett commences this day. Great exertions have been made by people of all classes to procure seats in the Town Hall, which will be full to a degree never before known in this peaceful province. No less than seven indictments are said to await the prisoner; it has been agreed that the robbery of Lord Mauleverer should be the first to come on. The principal witness in this case, against the prisoner, is understood to be the King's evidence, MacGrawler. No news, as yet, have been circulated concerning the suspected accomplices, Augustus Tomlinson and Edward Pepper. It is believed that the former has left the country, and that the latter is lurking among the low refuges of guilt with which the heart of the metropolis abounds. Report speaks highly of the person and manners of Lovett. He is also supposed to be a man of some talent, and was formerly engaged in an obscure periodical, edited by MacGrawler, and termed the *Altenæum*, or *Asinæum*. Nevertheless, we apprehend that his origin is remarkably low, and suitable to the nature of his pursuits. The prisoner will be most fortunate in a judge. Never did any one holding the same high office as Sir William Brandon, earn an equal reputation in so short a time. The Whigs are accustomed to sneer at us, when we insist on the *private* virtues of our Ministers. Let them look to Sir William Brandon, and confess that the austere morals may be linked with the soundest knowledge and the most brilliant genius. The opening address of the learned Judge to the jury at —, is perhaps the most impressive and solemn piece of eloquence in the English language!"—A cause for this eulogium might haply be found in another part of the paper, in which it was said, "Among the higher circles, we understand, the rumour has gone forth, that Sir William Brandon is to be recalled to his old parliamentary career in a more elevated scene. So highly are this gentleman's talents respected by his Majesty and the Ministers, that they are, it is reported, anxious to secure his assistance in the Cabinet, and of course, as his station precludes him from the Commons, in the House of Lords!"

When Dummie had spelt his "toilsome march" through the first of the above extracts, he turned round to the tall stranger, and eyeing him with a sort of winking significance, said—

"So, MacGrawler peaches, blows the gaff on his pals, eh! Vel now, I always suspected that 'ere son of a gun! Does you know, he used to be at the Mug many's a day, a teaching our little Paul, and says I to Piggy Lob, says I, 'Blow me tight, but that cove is a queer one! and if he does not come to be scragged,' says I, 'it will only be because he'll turn a rusty, and scrag one of his pals!' So you sees—(here Dummie looked round and his voice sank into a whisper)—so you sees, *Meester Pepper*, I vas no fool there!"

Long Ned dropped his pipe, and said sourly, and with a suspicious frown, "What! you know me?"

"To be sure and sartain I does," answered little Dummie, walking to the table where the robber sat. "Does not you know I?"

Ned regarded the interrogator with a sullen glance, which gradually brightened into knowledge. "Ah!" said he, with the air of a Brummel, "Mr. Bummie, or Dummie, I think, eh! Shake a paw—I'm glad to see you—Recollect the last time I saw you, you rather affronted me. Never mind. I dare say you did not mean it."

Encouraged by this affable reception from the highwayman, though a little embarrassed by Ned's allusion to former conduct on his part, which he felt was just, Dummie grinned, pushed a stool near Ned, sat himself down, and carefully avoiding any immediate answer to Ned's complaint, he rejoined:—

"Do you know, *Meester Pepper*, you struck I all of a heap. I could not have sposed as how you'd condescend now-a-days to come to the Mug, vhere I never seed you but vonce before. Lord love ye, they says as 'ow you go to all the fine places in ruffles, with a pair of silver pops in your vaistcoat pocket! Vy, the boys hereabouts say, that you and *Meester Tomlinson*, and this 'ere poor devil in quod, vere the finest gemmen in town; and Lord, for to think of your ciwility to a pitiful rag merchant, like I!"

"Ah!" said Ned, gravely, "there are sad principles afloat now. They want to do away with all distinctions in ranks,—to make a duke no better than his valet, and

a gentleman highwayman class with a filcher of foggles.* But, dammee if I do n't think misfortune levels us all quite enough: and misfortune brings me here, little Dummie!"

"Ah! you vants to keep out of the way of the bul-kies!"

"Right. Since poor Lovett was laid by the heels, which I must say was the fault of his own deuced gentlemanlike behaviour to me and Augustus (you've heard of Guz, you say), the knot of us seems quite broken. Oae's own friends look inclined to play one false; and really, the queer cuffins hover so sharply upon us, that I thought it safe to duck for a time. So I have taken a lodging in a cellar, and I intend for the next three months to board at the 'Mug.' I have heard that I may be sure of lying snug here:—Dummie, your health! Give us to the baccy!"

"I say, Meester Pepper," said Dummie, clearing his throat, when he had obeyed the request, "can you tell I, if so be you has met in your travels our little Paul? Poor chap! You knows as ow and vy he has sent to *quod* by Justice Burnflat. Vel, ven he got out, he vent to the devil, or summut like it, and ve have not eard a word of him since. You-members the lad—a nation fine cull, tall and strait as a harrow!"

"Why, you fool," said Ned, "do n't you know,"—then checking himself suddenly,—“ah! by-the-by, that rigmarole oath!—I was not to tell; though now it's past caring for, I fear! It is no use looking after the seal when the letter's burnt."

"Blow me," cried Dunnaker, with unaffected vehemence, "I sees as ow you know vots come of he! Many's the good turn I'll do you, if you vill but tell I."

"Why, does he owe you a dozen *bobs*;† or what, Dummie?" said Ned.

"Not he—not he," cried Dummie.

"What then, you want to do him a mischief of some sort?"

"Do little Paul a mischief!" ejaculated Dummie; "vy I've known the cull ever since he vas *that* high! No, but I vants to do him a great sarvice, Meester Pepper, and myself too,—and you to boot, fer aught that I know, Meester Pepper."

"Humph!" said Ned; "humph! what do you mean?"

* Pickpocket.

† Shillings.

I do, it is true, know where Paul is; but you must tell me first, why you wish to know, otherwise you may ask your grandfather for me."

A long, sharp, wistful survey did Mr. Dummie Dunna-ker cast around him before he rejoined. All seemed safe and convenient for confidential communication. The supine features of Mrs. Lobkins were hushed in a drowsy stupor: even the gray cat that lay by the fire was curled in the embrace of Morpheus. Nevertheless, it was in a close whisper that Dummie spoke.

"I dares be bound, Meester Pepper, that you members vell ven Harry Cook, the great Highwayman,—poor fellow! he's gone where ve must all go,—brought you, then quite a *gosssoon*,* for the first time, to the little back parlour, at the Cock and Hen, Dewereux Court."

Ned nodded assent.

"And you members as how I met Harry and you there, and I vas all afeared at you—cause vy? I had never seen you afore, and ve vas a going to *crack a swell's crib*.† And Harry spoke up for you, and said as ow, though you had just gone on the town, you vas already prime up to gammon:—you members, eh?"

"Ay, I remember all," said Ned: "it was the first and only house I ever had a hand in breaking into. Harry was a fellow of low habits, so I dropped his acquaintance, and took solely to the road, or a chance ingenuity now and then. I have no idea of a gentleman turning *cracksman*."‡

"Vel, so you vent with us, and we slipped you through a pane in the kitchen-vindow. You vas the least of us, big as you be now; and you vent round, and opened the door for us; and ven you had opened the door, you saw a voman had joined us, and you vere funkled then, and stayed without the *crib*; to keep vatch vile ve vent in."

"Well, well," cried Ned, "what the devil has all this rigmarole got to do with Paul?"

"Now do n't be glimflashey, but let me go on smack right about. Vel, when ve came out, you minds as ow the voman had a bundle in her arms, and you spake to her; and she answered you roughly, and left us all, and

* The reader has probably observed the use made by Dummie and Mrs. Lobkins of Irish phraseology or pronunciation. This is a remarkable trait in the dialect of the lowest orders in London, owing, we suppose, to their constant association with emigrants from "the first flower of the earth." Perhaps it is a modish affectation among the gentry of St. Giles's, just as we eke out our mother-tongue with French at Mayfair.

† Break into a gentleman's house.

‡ Burglar.

vent straight home; and ve vent and fenced the swag^{*} that wery night, and afterward napped the regulars.†—And sure you made us laugh artily, Meester Pepper, when you said, says you, 'That 'ere voman is a rum blowen!' So she vas, Meester Pepper!"

"Oh spare me," said Ned, affectedly, "and make haste; you keep me all in the dark. By-the-way, I remember that you joked me about the bundle; and when I asked what the woman had wrapped in it, you swore it was a child. Rather more likely that the girl, whoever she was, would have left a child behind her, than carried one off!" The face of Dummie waxed big with conscious importance.

"Vell now, you would not believe us; but it vas all true; that 'ere bundle vas the voman's child, I spose an unnatural von by the gemman: she let us into the ouse on condition ve helped her off vith it. And, blow me tight but ve paid ourselves vel for our trouble. That 'ere voman vas a strange cretur; they say she had been a Lord's blowen; but howsomever, she vas as ot-eaded and hodd as if she ad been. There vas hold Nick's row made on the matter, and the revard for our (de)tection vas so great, that as you vas not much tried yet, Harry thought it best for to take you vith im down to the country, and told you as ow it vas all a flam about the child in the bundle!"

"Faith," said Ned, "I believed him readily enough; and poor Harry was twisted shortly after, and I went into Ireland for safety, where I stayed two years,—and deuced good claret I got there!"

"So whiles you vas there," continued Dummie, "poor Judy, the voman, died,—she died in this wery house, and left the horphan to the (af)fection of Piggy Lob, who was nation fond of it surely! Oh! but I members vot a night it vas when poor Judy died; the vind whistled like mad, and the rain tumbled about as if it had got a holyday; and there the poor creature lay raving just over ed of this room we sits in! Laus-a-me, vat a sight it vas!"

Here Dummie paused, and seemed to recall in imagination the scene he had witnessed; but over the mind of Long Ned a ray of light broke slowly.

"Whew!" said he, lifting up his fore-finger, "whew! I smell a rat; this stolen child, then, was no other than Paul; but, pray, to whom did the house belong? for that

* Sold the booty.

† Took our shares.

fact Harry never communicated to me. I only heard the owner was a lawyer, or parson, or *some such thing!*"

"Vy now, I'll tell you, but do n't be glimflashey.—So, you see, ven Judy died, and Harry vas scragged, I vas the only von living who vas up to the secret; and when Mother Lob vas a taking a drop to comfort her when Judy vent off, I hopens a great box in which poor Judy kept her duds and rattletraps, and surely I finds at the bottom of the box hever so many letters and sich like,—for I knew as ow they vas there; so I whips these off and carries 'em ome with me, and soon arter, Mother Lob sold me the box o' duds for two quids—'cause vy? I vas a rag merchant! So now, I 'solved, since the secret vas all in my hown keeping, to keep it as tight as vinkey! for first, you sees as ow I vas afeard I should be hanged if I vent for to tell,—'cause vy? I stole a vatch, and lots more, as vell as the hurchin! and next, I vas afeard as ow the mother might come back and haunt me the same as Sall haunted Villy, for it vas a orrid night when her soul took ving. And hover and above this, Meester Pepper, I thought summut might turn hup by and by, in which it would be best for I to keep my hown counsel and nab the revard, if I hever durst make myself known."

Here Dummie proceeded to narrate how frightened he had been lest Ned should discover all; when (as it may be remembered, Pepper informed Paul at the beginning of this history) he encountered that worthy at Dame Lobkin's house,—how this fear had induced him to testify to Pepper that coldness and rudeness which had so enraged the haughty highwayman, and how great had been his relief and delight at finding that Ned returned to the Mug no more. He next proceeded to inform his new confidant of his meeting with the father (the sagacious reader knows where and when), and of what took place at that event. He said how, in his first negotiation with the father, prudently resolving to communicate drop by drop such information as he possessed, he merely, besides confessing to a share in the robbery, stated that *he thought* he knew the house, &c., to which the infant had been consigned,—and that, if so, it was still alive; but that he would inquire. He then related how the sanguine father, who saw that hanging Dummie for the robbery of his house might not be half so likely a method to recover his son as bribery and conciliation, not only forgave him his former outrage

but whetted his appetite to the search by rewarding him for his disclosure. He then proceeded to state how, unable any where to find Paul, or any trace of him, he amused the sire from time to time with forged excuses;—how, at first, the sums he received made him by no means desirous to expedite a discovery that would terminate such satisfactory receipts;—how at length the magnitude of the proffered reward, joined to the threats of the sire, had made him become seriously anxious to learn the real fate and present “whereabout” of Paul;—how, the last time he had seen the father, he had, by way of propitiation and first fruit, taken to him all the papers left by the unhappy mother and secreted by himself; and how he was now delighted to find that Ned was acquainted with Paul’s address. Since he despaired of finding Paul by his own exertions alone, he became less tenacious of his secret, and he now proffered Ned, on discovery of Paul, a third of that reward the whole of which he had once hoped to engross.

Ned’s eyes and mouth opened at this proposition. “But the name,—the name of the father? you have not told me that yet!” cried he, impatiently.

“Noa, noa!” said Dummie, archly, “I doesn’t tell you all, till you tells I summut. Where’s little Paul, I say; and where be us to get at him?”

Ned heaved a sigh.

“As for the oath,” said he, musingly, “it would be a sin to keep it, now that to break it can do him no harm, and may do him good! especially as, in case of imprisonment or death, the oath is not held to be binding; yet I fear it is too late for the reward. The father will scarcely thank you for finding his son!—Know, Dummie, that Paul is in — jail, and that he is one and the same person as Captain Lovett!”

Astonishment never wrote in more legible characters than she now displayed on the rough features of Dummie Dunnaker. So strong are the sympathies of a profession compared with all others, that Dummie’s first, confused thought was *that of pride*. “The great Captain Lovett!” he faltered. “Little Paul at the top of the profession! Lord, Lord!—I always said as how he’d the habmition to rise!”

“Well, well, but the father’s name?”

At this question, the expression of Dummie’s face fell,—a sudden horror struggled to his eyes—

CHAPTER XX.

Why is it, that at moments, there creeps over us an awe, a terror, overpowering but undefined? Why is it that we shudder without a cause, and feel the warm life-blood stand still in its courses? Are the dead too near?

FALKLAND.

* * * * *

Ha! sayest thou? Hideous thought, I feel it twine
O'er my iced heart, as curls around his prey
The sure and deadly serpent!

* * * * *

What! in the hush and in the solitude
Pass'd that dread soul away?—LOVE AND HATRED.

THE evening prior to that morning in which the above conversation occurred, Brandon passed alone in his lodging at —. He had felt himself too unwell to attend the customary wassail, and he sat indolently musing in the solitude of the old-fashioned chamber to which he was consigned. There, too, wax candles on the smooth, quaint table dimly struggled against the gloom of heavy panels, which were relieved at unfrequent intervals by portraits in oaken frames, dingy, harsh, and important with the pomp of laced garments and flowing wigs. The predilection of the landlady for modern tastes had, indeed, on each side of the huge fireplace, suspended more novel masterpieces of the fine arts. In emblematic gorgeousness hung the pictures of the four seasons, buxom wenches all, save Winter, who was deformingly bodied forth in the likeness of an aged carl. These were interspersed by an engraving of Lord Mauleverer, the Lieutenant of the neighbouring county, looking extremely majestic in his peer's robes; and by three typifications of Faith, Hope, and Charity—ladies with whom it may be doubted if the gay Earl ever before cultivated so close an intimacy. Curtains, of that antique chintz in which fasces of stripes are alternated by rows of flowers, filled the interstices of three windows; a heavy sideboard occupied the greater portion of one side of the room and on the opposite side, in the rear of Brandon, a vast screen stretched its slow length along.

and relieved the unpopulated and, as it were, desolate comfort of the apartment.

Pale and imperfectly streamed the light upon Brandon's face, as he sat in his large chair, leaning his cheek on one hand, and gazing with the unconscious earnestness of abstraction on the clear fire. At that moment, a whole phalanx of gloomy thought was sweeping in successive array across his mind. His early ambition, his ill-omened marriage, the causes of his after-rise in the wrong-judging world, the first dawn of his reputation, his rapid and flattering successes, his present elevation, his aspiring hope of far higher office, and more patrician honours—all these phantoms passed before him in checkered shadow and light: but ever with each stalked one disquieting and dark remembrance—the loss of his only son.

Weaving his ambition with the wish to revive the pride of his hereditary name, every acquisition of fortune or of fame rendered him yet more anxious to find the only one who could perpetuate these hollow distinctions to his race.

"I shall recover him yet!" he broke out, suddenly and aloud. As he spoke, a quick, darting, spasmodic pain ran shivering through his whole frame, and then fixed for one instant on his heart with a gripe like the talons of a bird: it passed away, and was followed by a deadly sickness. Brandon rose, and filling himself a large tumbler of water, drank with avidity. The sickness passed off like the preceding pain; but the sensation had, of late, been often felt by Brandon, and disregarded,—for few persons were less afflicted with the self-torture of hypochondria; but now, that night, whether it was more keen than usual, or whether his thought had touched on the string that jars naturally on the most startling of human anticipations, we know not, but, as he resumed his seat, the idea of his approaching dissolution shot like an icebolt through his breast.

So intent was this scheming man upon the living objects of the world, and so little were his thoughts accustomed to turn towards the ultimate goal of all things, that this idea obtruding itself abruptly on him, startled him with a ghastly awe. He *felt* the colour rush from his cheek, and a tingling and involuntary pain ran wandering through the channels of his blood, even from the roots of the hair to the soles of his feet. But the stern

soul of Brandon was not one which shadows could long affright. He nerved himself to meet the grim thought thus forced upon his mental eye, and he gazed on it with a steady and enduring look.

"Well," thought he, "is my hour coming, or have I yet the ordinary term of mortal nature to expect? It is true, I have lately suffered these strange revulsions of the frame with somewhat of an alarming frequency: perhaps this medicine, which healed the anguish of one infirmity, has produced another more immediately deadly? Yet why should I think this? My sleep is sound and calm, my habits temperate, my mind active and clear as in its best days. In my youth, I never played the traitor with my constitution; why should it desert me at the very threshold of my age? Nay, nay, these are but passing twitches, chills of the blood that begins to wax thin. Shall I learn to be less rigorous in my diet? Perhaps wine may reward my abstinence, in avoiding it for my luxuries, by becoming a cordial to my necessities! Ay, I will consult—I will consult, I must not die yet. I have—let me see, three—four grades to gain before the ladder is scaled. And, above all, I must regain my child! Lucy married to Mauleverer, myself a peer, my son wedded to—whom? Pray God he be not married already! my nephews and my children nobles! the house of Brandon restored, my power high in the upward gaze of men; my fame set on a more lasting basis than a skill in the quirks of law, these are *yet* to come, these I will *not* die till I have enjoyed! Men die not till their destinies are fulfilled. The spirit that swells and soars within me, says that the destiny of William Brandon is but half begun!"

With this conclusion, Brandon sought his pillow. What were the reflections of the prisoner whom he was to judge? Need we ask? Let us picture to ourselves his shattered health, the languor of sickness heightening the gloom which makes the very air of a jail—his certainty of the doom to be passed against him, his knowledge that the uncle of Lucy Brandon was to be his judge, that Mauleverer was to be his accuser; and that in all human probability the only woman he had ever loved must sooner or later learn the criminality of his life and the ignominy of his death; let us but glance at the above blackness of circumstances that surrounded him, and it would seem that there is but little doubt as to the com-

plexion of his thoughts! Perhaps, indeed, even in that terrible and desolate hour, one sweet face shone on him "and dashed the darkness all away." Perhaps too, whatever might be the stings of his conscience, one thought, one remembrance of a temptation mastered, and a heart not wronged, brought to his eyes tears that were sweet and healing in their source. But the heart of a man in Clifford's awful situation is dark and inscrutable, and often when the wildest and gloomiest external circumstances surround us, their reflection sleeps like a shadow, calm and still upon the mind.

The next morning the whole town of * * * (a town in which, we regret to say, an accident once detained ourself for three wretched days, and which we can, speaking therefore from profound experience, assert to be in ordinary times the most melancholy and peopleless-looking congregation of houses that a sober imagination can conceive) exhibited a scene of such bustle, animation, and jovial anxiety, as the trial for life or death to a fellow-creature can alone excite in the phlegmatic breasts of the English. Around the court the crowd thickened with every moment, until the whole market-place, in which the town-hall was situated, became one living mass. The windows of the houses were filled with women, some of whom had taken that opportunity to make parties to breakfast; and little round tables, with tea and toast on them, caught the eyes of the grinning mobbists as they gaped impatiently upwards.

"Ben," said a stout yeoman, tossing up a half-penny and catching the said coin in his right hand, which he immediately covered with the left,—“Ben, heads or tails that Lovett is hanged; heads hanged, tails not, for a crown.”

“Petticoats, to be sure,” quoth Ben, eating an apple, and it was heads!

“Damme, you’ve lost!” cried the yeoman, rubbing his rough hands with glee. So much for the good hearts of your lower classes! Out on the beastliness of the Pseudo-Liberals, who cry up the virtues of the poor. If they are virtuous, why would you reform them? ’t is because they are not virtuous that you should look to the laws that oppress them, and the ignorance that deludes!

It would have been a fine sight for Asmodeus, could he have perched on one of the housetops of the market-

place of ———, and looked on the murmuring and heaving sea of mortality below. Oh! the sight of a crowd round a court of law, or a gibbet, ought to make the devil split himself with laughter.

While the mob was fretting, and pushing, and swearing, and grinning, and betting, and picking pockets, and trampling feet, and tearing gowns, and scrambling nearer and nearer to the doors and windows of the court, Brandon was slowly concluding his abstemious repast preparatory to attendance on his judicial duties. His footman entered with a letter. Sir William glanced rapidly over the seal (one of those immense sacrifices of wax used at that day), adorned with a huge coat of arms, surmounted with an Earl's coronet, and decorated on either side with those supporters so dear to heraldic taste. He then tore open the letter, and read as follows:

"MY DEAR SIR,

"You know, that in the last conversation I had the honour to hold with you, I alluded, though perhaps somewhat distantly, to the esteem which His Majesty had personally expressed for your principles and talents; and his wish to testify it at the earliest opportunity. I am most happy to think I have it in my power to offer you, by command of His Majesty, such a situation in the Cabinet, as will be worthy of your reputation and genius. Mr. ——— has just tendered his resignation of the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I lose not a moment in requesting you to supply the place thus vacated. You will remember, my dear Sir William, that it is an office that has before been auspiciously, though too briefly, filled by an ornament of your profession; 'your principles, your loyalty, and your talents'—these are His Majesty's own words,—'make you a worthy successor of the great Lord Mansfield.'" There will be, as you are doubtless aware, an immediate creation of four peerages. Your name stands second on the list. The choice of title His Majesty graciously leaves to you; but he has hinted, that the respectable antiquity of your family would make him best pleased, were you to select the name of your own family-seat, which, if I mistake not, is Warlock. You will instruct me at your leisure as to the manner in which the patent should be made out, touching the succession, &c. Perhaps (excuse the license of an old

friend) this event may induce you to forsake your long-cherished celibacy.

"With great consideration,

"Believe me, my dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"_____.

"(*Private and confidential.*)"

Brandon's dark eye glanced quickly from the signature of the Premier, affixed to this communication, towards the mirror opposite him. He strode to it, and examined his own countenance with a long and wistful gaze. Never, we think, did youthful gallant about to repair to the trysting spot, in which fair looks make the greatest of earthly advantages, gaze more anxiously on the impartial glass, than now did the ascetic and scornful Judge; and never, we ween, did the eye of the said gallant retire with a more satisfied and triumphant expression.

"Yes, yes!" muttered the Judge, "no sign of infirmity is yet written *here*: the blood flows clear and warm enough, the cheek looks firm, too, and passing full, for one who was always of the lean kind. Aha! this letter is a cordial, an *elixir vite*. I feel as if a new lease were granted to the reluctant tenant. Lord Warlock,—the first Baron of Warlock,—Chancellor of the Exchequer. Why not the Woolsack?"

As he spoke, he strode unconsciously away; folding his arms, with that sort of joyous and complacent gesture which implies the idea of a man hugging himself in a silent delight. Assuredly, had the most skilful physician then looked upon the ardent and all-lighted face, the firm step, the elastic and muscular frame, the vigorous air of Brandon, as he mentally continued his soliloquy, he would have predicted for him as fair a grasp on longevity, as the chances of mortal life will allow. He was interrupted by the servant entering.

"It is twenty-five minutes after nine, sir," said he, respectfully.

"Sir,—Sir!" repeated Brandon. "Ah, well! so late!"

"Yes, sir, and the Sheriff's carriage is almost at the door."

"Humph,—Minister, Peer,—Warlock,—succession.—My son, my son!—would to God that I could find thee!"

Such were Brandon's last thoughts as he left the room. It was with great difficulty, so dense was the crowd, that the Judge drove up to the court. As the carriage slowly passed, the spectators pressed to the windows of the vehicle, and stood on tiptoe to catch a view of the celebrated lawyer. Brandon's face, never long indicative of his feelings, had now settled into its usual gravity, and the severe loftiness of his look chilled, while it satisfied, the curiosity of the vulgar. It had been ordered, that no person should be admitted until the Judge had taken his seat on the bench; and this order occasioned so much delay, owing to the accumulated pressure of the vast and miscellaneous group, that it was more than half an hour before the Court was able to obtain that decent order suiting the solemnity of the occasion. At five minutes before tea, a universal and indescribable movement announced that the prisoner was put to the bar. We read in one of the journals of that day, that "on being put to the bar, the prisoner looked round with a long and anxious gaze, which at length settled on the Judge, and then dropped, while the prisoner was observed to change countenance slightly. Lovett was dressed in a plain dark suit; he seemed to be about six feet high; and, though thin and worn, probably from the effect of his wound and imprisonment, he is remarkably well made, and exhibits the outward appearance of that great personal strength which he is said to possess, and which is not unfrequently the characteristic of daring criminals. His face is handsome and prepossessing, his eyes and hair dark, and his complexion pale, possibly from the effects of his confinement; there was a certain sternness in his countenance during the greater part of the trial. His behaviour was remarkably collected and composed. The prisoner listened with the greatest attention to the indictment, which the reader will find in another part of our paper, charging him with the highway robbery of Lord Mauleverer, on the night of the — of — last. He occasionally inclined his body forward, and turned his ear towards the Court; and he was observed, as the Jury were sworn, to look steadily in the face of each. He breathed thick and hard when the various aliases he had assumed, Howard, Cavendish, Jackson, &c. were read; but smiled, with an unaccountable expression, when the list was completed, as if exulting at the varieties of his

ingenuity. At twenty-five minutes past ten, Mr. Dyebright, the Counsel for the Crown, stated the case to the Jury."

Mr. Dyebright was a lawyer of great eminence; he had been a Whig all his life, but had latterly become remarkable for his insincerity, and subservience to the wishes of the higher powers. His talents were peculiar and effective. If he had little eloquence, he had much power; and his legal knowledge was sound and extensive. Many of his brethren excelled him in display; but no one, like him, possessed the secret of addressing a jury. Winningly familiar, seemingly candid to a degree that scarcely did justice to his cause, as if he were in an agony lest he should persuade you to lean a hair-breadth more on his side of the case than justice would allow; apparently all made up of good, homely, virtuous feeling; a disinterested regard for truth; a blunt yet tender honesty, seasoned with a few amiable fireside prejudices, which always come home to the hearts of your fathers of families and thorough-bred Britons; versed in all the niceties of language, and the magic of names; if he were defending crime, carefully calling it misfortune; if attacking misfortune, constantly calling it crime; Mr. Dyebright was exactly the man born to pervert justice, to tickle jurors, to cozen truth with a friendly smile, and to obtain a vast reputation as an excellent advocate. He began by a long preliminary flourish on the importance of the case. He said that he should, with the most scrupulous delicacy, avoid every remark calculated to raise unnecessary prejudice against the prisoner. He should not allude to his unhappy notoriety, his associations with the lowest dregs.—(Here up jumped the Counsel for the prisoner, and Mr. Dyebright was called to order.)—"God knows," resumed the learned gentleman, looking wistfully at the Jury, "that my learned friend might have spared himself this warning. God knows, that I would rather fifty of the wretched inmates of this county jail were to escape unharmed, than that a hair of the prisoner you behold at the bar should be unjustly touched. The life of a human being is at stake; we should be guilty ourselves of a crime, which on our death-beds we should tremble to recall, were we to suffer any consideration, whether of interest or of prejudice, or of undue fear for our own properties and lives, to bias us even to the turning of a straw

against the unfortunate prisoner. Gentlemen, if you find me travelling a single inch from my case; if you find me saying a single word calculated to harm the prisoner in your eyes, and unsupported by the evidence I shall call, then I implore you not to depend upon the vigilance of my learned friend; but to treasure these *my* errors in your recollection, and to consider them as so many arguments in favour of the prisoner. If, Gentlemen, I *could*, by any possibility, imagine that your verdict would be favourable to the prisoner, I can, unaffectedly, and from the bottom of my heart, declare to you that I should rejoice; a case might be lost, but a fellow-creature would be saved! Callous as we of the legal profession are believed, we have feelings like you; and I ask any one of you, Gentlemen of the Jury, any one who has ever felt the pleasures of social intercourse, the joy of charity, the heart's reward of benevolence,—I ask any one of you, whether, if he were placed in the arduous situation I now hold, all the persuasions of vanity would not vanish at once from his mind, and whether his defeat as an advocate, would not be rendered dear to him by the common and fleshly sympathies of a man! But, Gentlemen—(Mr. Dyebright's voice at once deepened and faltered)—there is a duty, a painful duty, we owe to our country; and never, in the long course of my professional experience, do I remember an instance in which it was more called forth than in the present. Mercy, Gentlemen, is dear, very dear to us all; but it is the deadliest injury we can inflict on mankind, when it is bought at the expense of justice."

The learned Gentleman then, after a few farther pre-fatory observations, proceeded to state how, on the night of — last, Lord Mauleverer was stopped and robbed by three men masked, of a sum of money amounting to above three hundred and fifty pounds, a diamond snuff-box, rings, watch, and a case of most valuable jewels,—how Lord Mauleverer, in endeavouring to defend himself, had passed a bullet through the clothes of one of the robbers—how, it would be proved, that the garments of the prisoner, found in a cave in Oxfordshire, and positively sworn to by a witness he should produce, exhibited a rent similar to such a one as a bullet would produce,—how, moreover, it would be positively sworn to by the same witness that the prisoner Lovett had come to the cavern with two accomplices not yet taken up,

since their rescue by the prisoner, and boasted of the robbery he had just committed; that in the clothes and sleeping apartment of the robber, the articles stolen from Lord Mauleverer were found, and that the purse containing the notes for three hundred pounds, the only thing the prisoner could probably have obtained time to carry off with him on the morning in which the cave was entered by the policemen, was found on his person on the day in which he had attempted the rescue of his comrades, and had been apprehended in that attempt. He stated, moreover, that the dress found in the cavern, and sworn to by one witness he should produce, as belonging to the prisoner, answered exactly to the description of the clothes worn by the principal robber, and sworn to by Mauleverer, his servant, and the postillions. In like manner, the colour of one of the horses found in the cavern, corresponded with that rode by the highwayman. On these circumstantial proofs, aided by the immediate testimony of the King's evidence (that witness whom he should produce), he rested a case which could, he averred, leave no doubt on the minds of any impartial jury. Such, briefly and plainly alleged, made the substance of the details entered into by the learned Counsel, who then proceeded to call his witnesses. The evidence of Lord Mauleverer (who was staying at Mauleverer Park, which was within a few miles of ———), was short and clear (it was noticed as a singular circumstance, that at the end of the evidence the prisoner bowed respectfully to his Lordship). The witness of the postillions and of the valet was no less concise; nor could all the ingenuity of Clifford's counsel shake any part of their evidence in his cross-examination. The main witness depended on by the Crown was now summoned, and the solemn countenance of Peter MacGrawler rose on the eyes of the Jury. One look of cold and blighting contempt fell on him from the eye of the prisoner, who did not again deign to regard him, during the whole of his examination.

The witness of MacGrawler was delivered with a composure worthy of the ex-editor of the *Asinæum*. Nevertheless, by the skill of Mr. Dyebright, it was rendered sufficiently clear a story to leave an impression on the Jury damnatory to the interests of the prisoner. The Counsel on the opposite side was not slow in perceiving the ground acquired by the adverse party; so,

clearing his throat, he rose with a sneering air to the cross-examination.

"So, so!" began Mr. Botheram, putting on a pair of remarkably large spectacles, wherewith he truculently regarded the witness—"So, so, Mr. MacGrawler, is that your name? eh!—Ah, it is—is it? a very respectable name it is too, I warrant. Well, sir, look at me. Now, on your oath, remember, were you ever the editor of a certain thing published every Wednesday, and called the *Attensæum*, or the *Asinsæum*, or some such name?"

Commencing with this insidious and self-damnatory question, the learned Counsel then proceeded, as artfully as he was able, through a series of interrogatories, calculated to injure the character, the respectable character, of MacGrawler, and weaken his testimony in the eyes of the Jury. He succeeded in exciting in the audience that feeling merriment wherewith the vulgar are always so delighted to intersperse the dull seriousness of hanging a human being. But though the jury themselves grinned, they were not convinced: the Scotsman retired from the witness-box, "scotched" perhaps in reputation, but not "killed" as to testimony. It was just before this witness concluded, that Lord Mauleverer caused to be handed to the Judge a small slip of paper, containing merely these words in pencil:—

"DEAR BRANDON,—A dinner waits you at Mauleverer Park, only three miles hence. Lord — and the Bishop of — meet you. Plenty of news from London, and a letter about you, which I will show to no one till we meet. Make haste and hang this poor fellow, that I may see you the sooner; and it is bad for both of us to wait long for a regular meal like dinner. I can't stay longer, it is so hot, and my nerves were always susceptible.

"Yours,

"MAULEVERER.

"If you will come, give me a nod. You know my hour,—it's always the same."

The Judge, glancing over the note, inclined his head gravely to the Earl, who withdrew; and in one minute afterward, a heavy and breathless silence fell over the whole Court. The prisoner was called upon for his defence: it was singular what a different sensation to that existing in their breasts the moment before, crept thrill-

ingly through the audience. Hushed was every whisper—vanished was every smile that the late cross-examination had excited; a sudden and chilling sense of the dread importance of the tribunal made itself abruptly felt in the minds of every one present.

Perhaps, as in the gloomy satire of Hogarth (the moral Mephistophiles of painters), the close neighbourhood of Pain to Mirth made the former come with the homelier shock to the heart:—be that as it may, a freezing anxiety numbing the pulse—and stirring through the hair, made every man in that various crowd feel a sympathy of awe with his neighbour, excepting only the hardened Judge and the hackneyed lawyers, and one spectator, an idiot, who had thrust himself in with the general press, and stood within a few paces of the prisoner, grinning unconsciously, and every now and then winking with a glassy eye at some one at a distance, whose vigilance he had probably eluded.

The face and aspect, even the attitude, of the prisoner, were well fitted to heighten the effect which would naturally have been created by any man under the same fearful doom. He stood at the very front of the bar, and his tall and noble figure was drawn up to its full height; a glow of excitement spread itself gradually over features at all times striking, and lighted an eye naturally eloquent, and to which various emotions, at that time, gave a more than commonly deep and impressive expression. He began thus:—

“My Lord, I have little to say, and I may at once relieve the anxiety of my Counsel, who now looks wistfully up to me, and add, that that little will scarcely embrace the object of defence. Why should I defend myself? Why should I endeavour to protract a life that a few days, more or less, will terminate, according to the ordinary calculations of chance? Such as it is, and has been, my life is vowed to the law, and the law will have the offering. Could I escape from this indictment, I know that seven others await me, and that by one or the other of these my conviction and my sentence must come. Life may be sweet to all of us, my Lord; and were it possible that mine could be spared yet a while, that continued life might make a better atonement for past actions than a death which, abrupt and premature, calls for repentance while it forbids redress

“But when the dark side of things is our only choice,

it is useless to regard the bright; idle to fix our eyes upon life, when death is at hand; useless to speak of contrition, when we are denied its proof. It is the usual policy of prisoners in my situation, to address the feelings, and flatter the prejudices of the Jury; to descant on the excellence of our laws, while they endeavour to disarm them; to praise justice, yet demand mercy; to talk of expecting acquittal, yet boast of submitting without a murmur to condemnation. For me, to whom all earthly interests are dead, this policy is idle and superfluous. I hesitate not to tell you, my Lord Judge,—to proclaim to you, Gentlemen of the Jury, that the laws which I have broken through my life, I despise in death. Your laws are but of two classes: the one makes criminals, the other punishes them. I have suffered by the one—I am about to perish by the other.

“My Lord, it was the turn of a straw which made me what I am. Four years ago, I was sent to the House of Correction for an offence which I did not commit; I went thither, a boy who had never infringed a single law,—I came forth in a few weeks, a man who was prepared to break all laws! Whence was this change?—was it my fault, or that of my condemners? You had first wronged me by a punishment which I did not deserve,—you wronged me yet more deeply, when (even had I been guilty of the first offence) I was sentenced to herd with hardened offenders, and graduates in vice and vice’s methods of support. The laws themselves caused me to break the laws! first, by implanting within me the goading sense of injustice; secondly, by submitting me to the corruption of example. Thus, I repeat,—and I trust my words will sink solemnly into the hearts of all present,—your legislation made me what I am! and it now *destroys me, as it has destroyed thousands, for being what it made me!* But for this the first aggression on me, I might have been what the world terms honest,—I might have progressed to old age and a peaceful grave, through the harmless cheateries of trade, or the honoured falsehoods of a profession. Nay, I might have supported the laws which I have now braved; like the Counsel opposed to me, I might have grown sleek on the vices of others, and advanced to honour by my ingenuity in hanging my fellow-creatures! The canting and prejudging part of the press has affected to set before you the merits of ‘honest ability,’ or ‘laborious trade,’

in opposition to my offences. What, I beseech you, are the props of your 'honest' exertion,—the profits of 'trade'? Are there no bribes to menials? Is there no adulteration of goods? Are the rich never duped in the price they pay,—are the poor never wronged in the quality they receive? Is there honesty in the bread you eat, in a single necessity which clothes, or feeds, or warms you? Let those whom the law protects consider it a protector; when did it ever protect *me*? When did it ever protect the poor man? The government of a state, the institutions of law, profess to provide for all those who 'obey.' Mark! a man hungers!—do you feed him? He is naked!—do you clothe him? If not, you break your covenant, you drive him back to the first law of Nature, and you hang him, not because he is guilty, but because you have *left* him naked and starving!—(A murmur among the mob below, with great difficulty silenced.)—One thing only I will add, and that not to move your mercy. No, nor to invest my fate with an idle and momentary interest; but because there are some persons in this world who have not known me as the criminal who stands before you, and whom the tidings of my fate may hereafter reach; and I would not have those persons view me in blacker colours than I deserve. Among all the rumours, Gentlemen, that have reached you, through all the tales and fables kindled from my unhappy notoriety, and my approaching doom, I put it to you, if you have heard that I have committed one sanguinary action, or one ruinous and deliberate fraud? You have heard that I have lived by the plunder of the rich,—I do not deny the charge. From the grinding of the poor, the habitual overreaching, or the systematic pilfering of my neighbours, my conscience is as free as it is from the charge of cruelty and bloodshed. Those *errors* I leave to honest mediocrity or virtuous exertion! You may, perhaps, find, too, that my life has not passed through a career of outrage, without scattering some few benefits on the road. In destroying me, it is true that you will have the consolation to think, that among the benefits you derive from my sentence, will be the salutary encouragement you give to other offenders, to offend to the *last* degree, and to divest outrage of no single aggravation! But if this does not seem to you any very powerful inducement, you may pause before you cut off from all amendment a man who seems neither wholly hard-

ened nor utterly beyond atonement. My Lord, my Counsel would have wished to summon witnesses, some to bear testimony to redeeming points in my own character, others to invalidate the oath of the witness against me; a man whom I saved from destruction, in order that he might destroy me. I do not think either necessary. The public press has already said of me what little good does not shock the truth; and had I not possessed something of those qualities which society does not disesteem, you would not have beheld me here at this hour! If I had saved myself as well as my companions, I should have left this country, perhaps for ever, and commenced a very different career abroad. I committed offences; I eluded you; I committed what, in my case, was an act of duty; I am seized, and I perish. But the weakness of my body destroys me, not the strength of your malice. Had I—(and as the prisoner spake, the haughty and rapid motion, the *enlarging of the form*, produced by the passion of the moment, made impressively conspicuous to all the remarkable power of his frame)—had I but my wonted health, my wonted command over these limbs, and these veins, I would have asked no friend, no ally, to favour my escape. I tell you, engines and guardians of the law, that I would have mocked your chains, and defied your walls, as ye know that I have mocked and defied them before. But my blood creeps now only in drops through its courses; and the heart that I had of old stirs feebly and heavily within me.—(The prisoner paused a moment, and resumed in an altered tone.)—Leaving, then, my own character to the ordeal of report, I cannot perhaps do better than leave to the same criterion that of the witness against me. I will candidly own, that under other circumstances, it might have been otherwise. I will candidly avow, that I might have then used such means as your law awards me, to procure an acquittal, and to prolong my existence—though in a new scene! as it is, what matters the cause in which I receive my sentence? Nay, it is even better to suffer by the first, than to linger to the last. It is some consolation, not again to stand where I now stand; to go through the humbling solemnities which I have this day endured; to see the smile of some, and retort the frown of others; to wrestle with the anxiety of the heart, and to depend on the caprice of the excited nerves. It is something to feel one part of the

drama of disgrace is over, and that I may wait unmo-
lested in my den, until, for one time only, I am again the
butt of the unthinking, and the monster of the crowd.
My Lord, I have now done! to you, whom the law deems
the prisoner's Counsel,—to you, Gentlemen of the Jury,
to whom it has delegated his fate, I leave the chances
of my life."

The prisoner ceased; but the same heavy silence
which, save when broken by one solitary murmur, had
lain over the Court during his speech, still continued even
for several moments after that deep and firm voice had
died on the ear. So different had been the defence of
the prisoner from that which had been expected; so
assuredly did the more hackneyed part of the audience,
even as he had proceeded, imagine that, by some artful
turn, he would at length wind into the usual courses of
defence, that when his unfaltering and almost stern ac-
cents paused, men were not prepared to feel that his
speech was finished, and the pause involuntarily jarred
on them, as untimeous and abrupt. At length, when
each of the audience slowly awoke to the conviction that
the prisoner had indeed concluded his harangue, a move-
ment eloquent of feelings released from a suspense which
had been perhaps the more earnest and the more blended
with awe, from the boldness and novelty of the words
on which it hung, circled around the Court. The Jurors
looked confusedly at each other, but not one of them
spoke even by a whisper; their feelings, which had been
aroused by the speech of the prisoner, had not, from its
shortness, its singularity, and the haughty impolicy of its
tone, been so far guided by its course, as to settle into
any state of mind clearly favourable to him, or the re-
verse; so that each man waited for his neighbour to
speak first, in order that he might find, as it were, in
another, a kind of clew to the indistinct and excited feel-
ings which wanted utterance in himself.

The Judge, who had been from the first attracted by the
air and aspect of the prisoner, had perhaps, notwith-
standing the hardness of his mind, more approvingly
than any one present, listened to the defence; for, in the
scorn of the hollow institutions and the mock honesty
of social life, so defyingly manifested by the prisoner,
Brandon recognised elements of mind remarkably con-
genial to his own, and this sympathy was heightened by
the hardihood of physical nerve and moral intrepidity

displayed by the prisoner; qualities which, among men of a similar mould, often form the strongest motive of esteem, and sometimes (as we read of in the Imperial Corsican and his chiefs) the *only* point of attraction! Brandon was however soon recalled to his cold self, by a murmur of vague applause circling throughout the common crowd, among whom the general impulse always manifests itself first, and to whom the opinions of the prisoner, though but imperfectly understood, came more immediately home, than they did to the better and richer classes of the audience. Ever alive to the decorums of form, Brandon instantly ordered silence in the Court; and when it was again restored; and it was fully understood that the prisoner's defence had closed, the Judge proceeded to sum up.

It is worthy of remark, that many of the qualities of mind which seem most unamiable in private life, often conduce with a singular felicity to the ends of public: and thus the stony firmness characteristic of Brandon, was a main cause which made him admirable as a judge. For men in office err no less from their feelings than their interests.

Glancing over his notes, the Judge inclined himself to the Jury, and began with that silver and ringing voice which particularly distinguished Brandon's eloquence, and carries with it in high stations so majestic and candid a tone of persuasion. He pointed out, with a clear brevity, the various points of the evidence; he dwelt for a moment on the attempt to cast disrepute on the testimony of MacGrawler,—but called a proper attention to the fact, that the attempt had been unsupported by witnesses or proof. As he proceeded, the impression made by the prisoner on the minds of the Jury slowly melted away; and perhaps, so much do men soften when they behold clearly the face of a fellow-man dependent on them for life, it acted disadvantageously on the interests of Clifford, that, during the summing up, he leaned back in the dock, and prevented his countenance from being seen. When the evidence had been gone through, the Judge concluded thus:—

“The Prisoner, who, in his defence (on the principles and opinions of which I now forbear to comment), certainly exhibited the signs of a superior education, and a high though perverted ability, has alluded to the reports circulated by the public press, and leaned some little stress

on the various anecdotes tending to his advantage, which he supposes have reached your ears. I am by no means willing that the prisoner should be deprived of whatever benefit may be derivable from such a source ; but it is not in this place, nor at this moment, that it can avail him. All you have to consider is the evidence before you. All on which you have to decide is, whether the prisoner be or be not guilty of the robbery of which he is charged. You must not waste a thought on what redeems or heightens a supposed crime—you must only decide on the crime itself. Put away from your minds, I beseech you, all that interferes with the main case. Put away also from your motives of decision all forethought of other possible indictments to which the prisoner has alluded, but with which you are necessarily unacquainted.

“If you doubt the evidence, whether of one witness or of all, the prisoner must receive from you the benefit of that doubt. If not, you are sworn to a solemn oath, which compels you to forego all minor considerations—which compels you to watch narrowly that you be not influenced by the infirmities natural to us all, but criminal in you, to lean towards the side of a mercy that would be rendered by your oath a perjury to God, and by your duty, as impartial citizens, a treason to your country. I dismiss you to the grave consideration of the important case you have heard ; and I trust that He to whom all hearts are open and all secrets are known, will grant you the temper and the judgment to form a right decision !”

There was in the majestic aspect and thrilling voice of Brandon, something which made the commonest form of words solemn and impressive ; and the hypocrite, aware of this felicity of manner, generally, as now, added weight to his concluding words, by a religious allusion, or a scriptural phraseology. He ceased ; and the Jury, recovering the effect of his adjuration, consulted for a moment among themselves : the foreman, then addressing the Court on behalf of his fellow-jurors, requested leave to retire for deliberation. An attendant bailiff being sworn in, we read in the journals of the day, which noted the divisions of time with that customary scrupulosity rendered terrible by the reflection how soon all time and seasons may perish for the hero of the scene, that it “was at twenty-five minutes to two that the Jury withdrew.”

Perhaps in the whole course of a criminal trial there

is no period more awful then that occupied by the deliberation of the Jury. In the present case, the prisoner, as if acutely sensible of his situation, remained in the rear of the dock, and buried his face in his hands. They who stood near him observed, however, that his breast did not seem to swell with the convulsive emotion customary to persons in his state, and that not even a sigh, or agitated movement, escaped him. The Jury had been absent about twenty minutes, when a confused noise was heard in the Court. The face of the Judge turned in commanding severity towards the quarter whence it proceeded. He perceived a man of a coarse garb and mean appearance endeavouring rudely and violently, to push his way through the crowd towards the Bench, and at the same instant he saw one of the officers of the court approaching the disturber of its tranquillity, with no friendly intent. The man, aware of the purpose of the constable, exclaimed with great vehemence, "I vill give thees to my Lord the Judge, blow me if I von't!" and as he spoke he raised high above his head a soiled scrap of paper folded awkwardly in the shape of a letter. The instant Brandon's eye caught the rugged features of the intrusive stranger, he motioned with rather less than his usual slowness of gesture to one of his official satellites. Bring me that paper instantly!" he whispered.

The officer bowed and obeyed. The man, who seemed a little intoxicated, gave it with a look of ludicrous triumph and self-importance.

"Stand away, man!" he added to the constable, who now laid hand on his collar—"you 'll see vot the Judge says to that 'ere bit of paper, and so vill the prisoner, poor fellow!"

This scene, so unworthy the dignity of the court, attracted the notice and (immediately around the intruder) the merriment of the crowd, and many an eye was directed towards Brandon, as with calm gravity he opened the note and glanced over the contents. In a large schoolboy hand—it was the hand of Long Ned—were written these few words:—

"MY LORD JUDGE,

"I make bold to beg you will do all you can for the prisoner at the Barre; as he is no other than the 'Paul' I spoke to your worship about. You know what I mean.

"DUMMIE DUNNAKER.

As he read this note, the Judge's head was observed to droop suddenly, as if by a sickness or a spasm; but he recovered himself instantly, and whispering the officer who brought him the note, said, "See that that madman be immediately removed from the court, and lock him up *alone*. He is so deranged as to be dangerous!"

The officer lost not a moment in seeing the order executed. Three stout constables dragged the astounded Dummie from the court in an instant, yet the more ruthlessly for his ejaculating—

"Eh, sirs, what 's thees? I tells you I have saved the Judge's hown flesh and blood. Vy now, gently there, you 'll smart for this, my fine fellow! Never you mind. Paul, my arty: I 'se done you a pure good—"

"Silence!" proclaimed the voice of the Judge, and that voice came forth with so commanding a tone of power that it awed Dummie, despite his intoxication. In a moment more, and ere he had time to recover, he was without the court. During this strange hubbub, which nevertheless scarcely lasted above two or three minutes, the prisoner had not once lifted his head nor appeared aroused in any manner from his reverie. And scarcely had the intruder been withdrawn before the Jury returned.

The verdict was, as all had foreseen,—"*Guilty*;" but it was coupled with a strong recommendation to mercy.

The prisoner was then asked, in the usual form, whether he had to say any thing why sentence of death should not be passed against him.

As these dread words struck upon his ear, slowly the prisoner rose. He directed first towards the Jury a brief and keen glance, and his eyes then rested full, and with a stern significance, on the face of his Judge.

"My Lord," he began, "I have but one reason to advance against the sentence of the law. If you have interest to prevent or mitigate it, that reason will, I think, suffice to enlist you on my behalf. I said that the first cause of those offences against the law which bring me to this bar, was the committing me to prison on a charge of which I was wholly innocent! My Lord Judge, *you* were the man who accused me of that charge, and subjected me to that imprisonment! Look at me well, my Lord, and you may trace in the countenance of the hardened felon you are about to adjudge to death, the features of a boy whom, some four years ago, you accused

before a London magistrate of the theft of your watch. On the oath of a man who has one step on the threshold of death, the accusation was unjust. And, fit minister of the laws you represent! you, who will now pass my doom,—you were the cause of my crimes! My Lord, I have done. I am ready to add another to the long and dark list of victims who are first polluted, and then sacrificed, by the blindness and injustice of human codes!*

While Clifford spoke, every eye turned from him to the Judge, and every one was appalled by the ghastly and fearful change which had fallen over Brandon's face. Men said afterward, that they saw written there, in terrible distinctness, the characters of death; and there certainly seemed something awful and preternatural in the bloodless and haggard calmness of his proud features. Yet his eye did not quail, nor the muscles of his lip quiver. And with even more than his wonted loftiness he met the regard of the prisoner. But, as alone conspicuous throughout the motionless and breathless crowd, the judge and criminal gazed upon each other; and as the eyes of the spectators wandered on each, a thrilling and electric impression of a powerful likeness between the doomed and the doomer, for the first time in the trial, struck upon the audience, and increased, though they scarcely knew why, the sensation of pain and dread which the prisoner's last words excited. Perhaps it might have chiefly arisen from a common expression of fierce emotion conquered by an iron and stern character of mind, or perhaps, now that the ashy paleness of exhaustion had succeeded the excited flush on the prisoner's face, the similarity of complexion thus obtained made the likeness more obvious than before; or perhaps the spectators had not hitherto fixed so searching, or, if we may so speak, so alternating a gaze upon the two. However that be, the resemblance between the men, placed as they were in such widely different circumstances—that resemblance which, as we have hinted, had at certain moments occurred startlingly to Lucy, was now plain and unavoidably striking:—the same the dark hue of their complexions, the same the haughty and Roman outline of their faces, the same the height of the forehead, the same even a displeasing and sarcastic rigidity of mouth, which made the most conspicuous feature in Brandon, and which was the only point that deteriorated from the singular beauty of Clifford. But

above all, the same inflexible, defying, stubborn spirit, though in Brandon it assumed the stately cast of majesty, and in Clifford it seemed the desperate sternness of the bravo, stamped itself in both. Though Clifford ceased, he did not resume his seat, but stood in the same attitude as that in which he had reversed the order of things, and merged the petitioner in the accuser. And Brandon himself, without speaking or moving, continued still to survey him. So, with erect fronts, and marble countenances, in which what was defying and resolute did not altogether quell a mortal leaven of pain and dread, they looked as might have looked the two men in the Eastern story, who had the power of gazing each other unto death.

What, at that moment, was raging in Brandon's heart, it is in vain to guess. He doubted not for a moment that he beheld before him his long-lost, his anxiously-demanded son! Every fibre, every corner of his complex and gloomy soul, that certainty reached, and blasted with a hideous and irresistible glare! The earliest, perhaps the strongest, though often the least-acknowledged principle of his mind, was the desire to rebuild the fallen honours of his house; its last scion he now beheld before him, covered with the darkest ignominies of the law! He had coveted worldly honours; he beheld their legitimate successor in a convicted felon! He had garnered the few affections he had spared from the objects of pride and ambition, in his son. That son he was about to adjudge to the gibbet and the hangman! Of late, he had increased the hopes of regaining his lost treasure, even to an exultant certainty. Lo! the hopes were accomplished! How? With these thoughts warring, in what manner we dare not even by an epithet express, within him, we may cast one hasty glance on the horror of aggravation they endured, when he heard the prisoner accuse him as the cause of his present doom, and felt himself at once the murderer and the judge of his son!

Minutes had elapsed since the voice of the prisoner ceased; and Brandon now drew forth the black cap. As he placed it slowly over his brows, the increasing and corpse-like whiteness of his face became more glaringly visible, by the contrast which this dread head-gear presented. Twice as he essayed to speak, his voice failed him, and an indistinct murmur came forth from his hueless lips, and died away like a fitful and feeble wind. But with the third effort, the resolution and long self-

tyranny of the man conquered, and his voice went clear and unfaltering through the crowd, although the severe sweetness of its wanted tones was gone, and it sounded strange and hollow on the ears that drank it.

"Prisoner at the bar!—It has become my duty to announce to you the close of your mortal career. You have been accused of a daring robbery, and, after an impartial trial, a Jury of your countrymen, and the laws of your country, have decided against you. The recommendation to mercy—(here, only, throughout his speech, Brandon gasped convulsively for breath)—so humanely added by the Jury, shall be forwarded to the supreme power; but I cannot flatter you with much hope of its success—(the lawyers looked with some surprise at each other: they had expected a far more unqualified mandate, to abjure all hope from the Jury's recommendation).—Prisoner! for the opinions you have expressed, you are now only answerable to your God; I forbear to arraign them. For the charge you have made against me, whether true or false, and for the anguish it has given me, may you find pardon at another Tribunal! It remains for me only—under a reserve too slight, as I have said, to afford you a *fair* promise of hope—only to—to—(all eyes were on Brandon: he felt it, exerted himself for a last effort, and proceeded)—to pronounce on you the sharp sentence of the law! It is, that you be taken back to the prison whence you came, and thence (when the supreme authority shall appoint) to the place of execution, to be there hanged by the neck till you are dead; and the Lord God Almighty have mercy on your soul!"

With this address concluded that eventful trial; and while the crowd, in rushing and noisy tumult, bore towards the door, Brandon, concealing to the last, with a Spartan bravery, the anguish which was gnawing at his entrails, retired from the awful pageant. For the next half hour he was locked up with the strange intruder on the proceedings of the Court. At the end of that time the stranger was dismissed; and in about double the same period Brandon's servant re-admitted him, accompanied by another man, with a slouched hat, and in a cartman's frock. The reader need not be told that the new comer was the friendly Ned, whose testimony was indeed a valuable corroborative to Dummie's, and whose regard for Clifford, aided by an appetite for rewards, had induced him to venture to the town of —, although he

carried concealed in a safe suburb, until re-assured by a written promise from Brandon of safety to his person, and a sum for which we might almost doubt whether he would not have consented (so long had he been mistaking means for an end) to be hanged himself. Brandon listened to the details of these confederates, and when they had finished, he addressed them thus :—

“I have heard you, and am convinced you are liars and impostors : there is the money I promised you—(throwing down a pocket-book)—take it—and, hark you, if ever you dare whisper—ay, but a breath of the atrocious lie you have now forged, be sure I will have you dragged from the recess or nook of infamy in which you may hide your heads, and hanged for the crimes you have already committed. I am not the man to break my word—begone!—quit this town instantly: if, in two hours hence, you are found here, your blood be on your own heads!—Begone, I say!”

These words, aided by a countenance well adapted at all times to expressions of a menacing and ruthless character, at once astounded and appalled our accomplices. They left the room in hasty confusion; and Brandon, now alone, walked with uneven steps (the alarming weakness and vacillation of which he did not himself feel) to and fro the apartment. The hell of his breast was stamped upon his features, but he uttered only one thought aloud!

“I may,—yes, yes, I *may* yet conceal this disgrace to my name!”

His servant tapped at the door to say that the carriage was ready, and that Lord Mauleverer had bid him remind his master that they dined punctually at the hour appointed.

“I am coming!” said Brandon, with a slow and startling emphasis on each word. But he first sat down and wrote a letter to the official quarter, strongly aiding the recommendation of the Jury; and we may conceive how pride clung to him to the last, when he urged the substitution for death, of transportation *for life*! As soon as he had sealed this letter, he summoned an express, gave his orders coolly and distinctly, and attempted, with his usual stateliness of step, to walk through a long passage which led to the outer door. He found himself fail. “Come hither,” he said to his servant—“give me your arm!”

All Brandon's domestics, save the one left with Lucy, stood in awe of him, and it was with some hesitation that his servant ventured to inquire "if his master felt well."

Brandon looked at him, but made no reply: he entered his carriage with slight difficulty, and telling the coachman to drive as fast as possible, pulled down (a general custom with him) all the blinds of the windows.

Meanwhile, Lord Mauleverer, with six friends, was impatiently awaiting the arrival of the seventh guest.

"Our august friend tarries!" quoth the Bishop of —, with his hands folded across his capacious stomach. "I fear the turbot your Lordship spoke of may not be the better for the length of the trial."

"Poor fellow!" said the Earl of —, slightly yawning.

"Whom do you mean?" asked Mauleverer, with a smile. "The Bishop, the Judge, or the turbot?"

"Not one of the three, Mauleverer—I spoke of the prisoner."

"Ah, the fine dog! I forgot him," said Mauleverer.—"Really, now you mention him, I must confess that he inspires me with great compassion; but, indeed, it is very wrong in him to keep the Judge so long."

"Those hardened wretches have such a great deal to say," mumbled the Bishop, sourly.

"True!" said Mauleverer; "a religious rogue would have had some bowels for the state of the church esu-rients!"

"Is it really true, Mauleverer," asked the Earl of —, "that Brandon is to be Chancellor of the Exchequer—very unusual in his station, is it not?"

"Mansfield's a precedent, I fancy!" said Mauleverer. "God! how hungry I am!"

A groan from the Bishop echoed the complaint.

"I suppose it would be against all decorum to sit down to dinner without him?" said Lord —.

"Why, really, I fear so," returned Mauleverer. "But our health—our health is at stake: we will only wait five minutes more. By Jove there 's the carriage! I beg your pardon for my heathen oath, my Lord Bishop."

"I forgive you!" said the good Bishop, smiling.

The party thus engaged in colloquy were stationed at a window opening on the gravel road, along which the Judge's carriage was now seen rapidly approaching; this window was but a few yards from the porch, and had

been partially opened for the better reconnoitring the approach of the expected guest.

"He keeps the blinds down still! Absence of mind, or shame at unpunctuality—which is the cause, Mauleverer?" said one of the party.

"Not shame, I fear!" answered Mauleverer. "Even the indecent immorality of delaying our dinner could scarcely bring a blush to the parchment skin of my learned friend."

Here the carriage stopped at the porch; the carriage-door was opened.

"There seems a strange delay," said Mauleverer, peevishly. "Why does not he get out?"

As he spoke, a murmur among the attendants, who appeared somewhat strangely to crowd around the carriage, smote the ears of the party.

"What do they say?—What?" said Mauleverer, putting his hand to his ear.

The Bishop answered hastily; and Mauleverer, as he heard the reply, forgot for once his susceptibility to cold, and hurried out to the carriage-door. His guests followed.

They found Brandon leaning against the farther corner of the carriage—a corpse. One hand held the check-string, as if he had endeavoured involuntarily, but ineffectually, to pull it. The right side of his face was partially distorted, as by convulsion or paralysis; but not sufficiently so to destroy that remarkable expression of loftiness and severity which had characterized the features in life. At the same time, the distortion which had drawn up on one side the muscles of the mouth, had deepened into a startling broadness the half-sneer of derision that usually lurked around the lower part of his face. Thus, unwitnessed and abrupt, had been the disunion of the clay and spirit of a man who, if he passed through life a bold, scheming, stubborn, unwavering hypocrite, was not without something high even amid his baseness, his selfishness, and his vices; who seems less by nature to have loved sin, than by some strange perversion of reason to have disdained virtue, and who, by a solemn and awful suddenness of *fate* (for who shall venture to indicate the judgment of the arch and unseen Providence, even when it appears to mortal eye the least obscured), won the dreams, the objects, the triumphs of hope, to be blasted by them at the moment of acquisition!

CHAPTER XXI.

AND LAST.

——— Subtle,—scurly—Maimson, Dol,
Hot Ananias, Dapper, Brugger, all
With whom I traded.

THE ALCHEMIST.

As when some rural citizen, retired for a fleeting holiday, far from the cares of the world, "*strepitumque Romæ*," to the sweet shades of Pentonville, or the remoter plains of Clapham, conducts some delighted visiter over the intricacies of that Dædalian masterpiece which he is pleased to call his labyrinth or maze,—now smiling furtively at his guest's perplexity,—now listening with calm superiority to his futile and erring conjectures,—now maliciously accompanying him through a flattering path, in which the baffled adventurer is suddenly checked by the blank features of a thoroughfareless hedge,—now trembling as he sees the guest stumbling unawares into the right track, and now relieved, as he beholds him, after a pause of deliberation, wind into the wrong,—even so, O pleasant reader, doth the sage novelist conduct thee through the labyrinth of his tale, amusing himself with thy self-deceits, and spinning forth, in prolix pleasure, the quiet yarn of his entertainment from the involutions which occasion thy fretting eagerness and perplexity. But as when, thanks to the host's good-nature or fatigue! the mystery is once unravelled, and the guest permitted to penetrate even unto the concealed end of the leafy maze; the honest cit, satisfied with the pleasant pain; he has already bestowed upon his visiter, puts him not to the labour of retracing the steps he hath so erratically trod, but leads him in three strides, and through a simpler path, at once to the mouth of the maze, and dismisseth him elsewhere for entertainment; even so will the prudent narrator, when the intricacies of his plot are once unfolded, occasion no stale and profitless delays to his wearied reader, but conduct him, with as much brevity as convenient, without the labyrinth which has ceased to retain the interest of a secret.

We shall therefore, in pursuance of the cit's policy, relate as rapidly as possible that part of our narrative which yet remains untold. On Brandon's person was found the paper which had contained so fatal an intelligence of his son; and when brought to Lord Mauleverer, the words struck that person (who knew Brandon had been in search of his lost son, whom we have seen that he had been taught however to suppose illegitimate, though it is probable that many doubts whether he had not been deceived, must have occurred to his natural sagacity) as sufficiently important to be worth an inquiry after the writer. Dummie was easily found, for he had not yet turned his back on the town when the news of the Judge's sudden death was brought back to it, and taking advantage of that circumstance, the friendly Dunnaker remained altogether in the town (albeit his long companion deserted it as hastily as might be), and whiled the time by presenting himself at the jail, and after some ineffectual efforts winning his way to Clifford: easily tracked by the name he had given to the governor of the jail, he was conducted the next day to Lord Mauleverer, and his narrative, confused as it was, and proceeding even from so suspicious a quarter, thrilled those digestive organs, which in Mauleverer stood proxy for a heart, with feelings as much resembling awe and horror as our good peer was capable of experiencing. Already shocked from his worldly philosophy of indifference by the death of Brandon, he was more susceptible to a remorseful and salutary impression at this moment, than he might have been at any other; and he could not, without some twinges of conscience, think of the ruin he had brought on the mother of the being he had but just prosecuted to the death. He dismissed Dummie, and after a little consideration he ordered his carriage, and leaving the burial of his friend to the care of his man of business, he set off for London, and the house in particular of the Secretary of the Home Department. We would not willingly wrong the noble penitent; but we venture a suspicion that he might not have preferred a personal application for mercy to the prisoner to a written one, had he not felt certain unpleasant qualms in remaining in a country house, overshadowed by ceremonies so gloomy as those of death. The letter of Brandon, and the application of Mauleverer, obtained for Clifford a relaxation of his sentence. He

was left for perpetual transportation. A ship was already about to sail, and Mauleverer, content with having saved his life, was by no means anxious that his departure from the country should be saddled with any superfluous delay.

Meanwhile, the first rumour that reached London respecting Brandon's fate was, that he had been found in a fit, and was lying dangerously ill at Mauleverer's; and before the second and more fatally sure report arrived, Lucy had gathered from the visible dismay of Barlow, whom she anxiously cross-questioned, and who, really loving his master, was easily affected into communication, the first and more flattering intelligence. To Barlow's secret delight, she insisted instantly on setting off to the supposed sick man; and, accompanied by Barlow and her woman, the affectionate girl hastened to Mauleverer's house on the evening of the very day the Earl left it. Although the carriages did not meet, owing perhaps to the circumstance of changing horses at different inns, Lucy had not proceeded far before Barlow learned, from the gossip of the road, the real state of the case. Indeed, it was at the first stage that, with a mournful countenance, he approached the door of the carriage, and, announcing the inutility of proceeding farther, begged of Lucy to turn back. So soon as Miss Brandon had overcome the first shock which this intelligence gave her, she said, with calmness, "Well, Barlow, if it be so, we have still a duty to perform. Tell the postboys to drive on."

"Indeed, madam, I cannot see what use it can be fretting yourself, and you so poorly. If you will let me go, I will see every attention paid to the remains of my poor master."

"When my father lay dead," said Lucy, with a grave and sad sternness in her manner, "he who is now no more sent no proxy to perform the last duties of a brother, neither will I send one to discharge those of a niece, and prove that I have forgotten the gratitude of a daughter.—Drive on!"

We have said, that there were times when a spirit was stricken from Lucy little common to her in general, and how the command of her uncle sat upon her brow.—On sped the horses, and for several minutes Lucy remained silent: her woman did not dare to speak. At length, Miss Brandon turned, and covering her face with her hands,

burst into tears so violent, that they alarmed her attendant, even more than her previous stillness. "My poor, poor uncle," she sobbed, and those were all her words.

We must pass over Lucy's arrival at Lord Mauleverer's house—we must pass over the weary days that elapsed, before that unconscious body was consigned to dust, with which, could it yet have retained one spark of its haughty spirit, it would have refused to blend its atoms.

She had loved the deceased incomparably beyond his merits, and, resisting all remonstrances to the contrary, she witnessed herself the dreary ceremony which bequeathed the human remains of William Brandon to dust and to the worms. On that same day Clifford received the mitigation of his sentence, and on that day another trial awaited Lucy. We think briefly to convey to the reader what that scene was: we need only observe that Dummie Dunnaker, decoyed by his great love for little Paul—whom he delightedly said he found not the least "stuck up by his great fame and *hélévation*," still lingered in the town, and was not only aware of the relationship of the cousins, but had gleaned from Long Ned as they journeyed down to ****, the affection entertained by Clifford for Lucy. Of the manner in which the communication reached Lucy we need not speak. Suffice it to say, that on the day in which she had performed the last duty to her uncle—she learned for the first time her lover's situation. On that evening in the convict's cell the cousins met; their conference was low, for the jailer stood within hearing, and it was broken by Lucy's convulsive sobs; but the voice of one whose iron nerves were not unworthy of the offspring of William Brandon was clear, and audible to her ear even though uttered in a whisper that scarcely stirred his lips. It seemed as if Lucy, smitten to the inmost heart by the generosity with which her lover had torn himself from her, at the time that her wealth might have raised him in any other country far from the perils and the crimes of his career in this, perceiving now for the first time, and in all their force, the causes of his mysterious conduct; melted by their relationship, and forgetting herself utterly in the desolate and dark situation, in which she beheld one who, whatever his crimes, had not been criminal towards her;—it seemed as if, carried away by these emotions, she had yielded altogether to the fondness and

devotion of her nature, that she had wished to leave home, and friends, and fortune, and share with him his punishment and his shame. "Why?" she faltered, "Why, why not? we are all that is left to each other in the world—your father and mine were brothers, let me be to you as a sister; what is there left for me here? Not one being whom I love, or who cares for me—not one!"

It was then that Clifford summoned all his courage as he answered—perhaps now that he felt (though here his knowledge was necessarily confused and imperfect) his birth was not unequal to hers—now that he read, or believed that he read, in her wan cheek and attenuated form that desertion to her was death, and that generosity and self-sacrifice had become too late; perhaps these thoughts concurring with a love in himself beyond all words, and a love in her which it was above humanity to resist—altogether conquered and subdued him. Yet, as we have said, his voice breathed calmly in her ear, and his eye only, which brightened with a steady and resolute hope, betrayed his mind. "Live, then!" said he, as he concluded, "My sister, my mistress, my bride, live! in one year from this day—I repeat—I promise it thee!"

The interview was over, and Lucy returned home with a firm step. She was on foot—the rain fell in torrents—yet, even in her precarious state, her health suffered not; and when within a week from that time she read that Clifford had departed to the bourne of his punishment, she read the news with a steady eye, and a lip that, if it grew paler, did not quiver. Shortly after that time, Miss Brandon departed to an obscure town by the seaside, and there continued to reside, refusing all society. As the birth of Clifford was known but to few, and his legitimacy was unsuspected even by Mauleverer—Lucy succeeded to the great wealth of her uncle, and this circumstance made her more than ever an object of attraction in the eyes of her noble adorer. Finding himself unable to see her, he wrote her more than one epistle; but as Lucy continued inflexible, he, at length disgusted by her want of taste, ceased his pursuit, and resigned himself to the continued sterility of unwedded life. As the months waned, Miss Brandon seemed to grow weary of her retreat; and immediately on attaining her majority, which she did about eight months after Brandon's death, she transferred the bulk of her wealth to France, where, it was understood (for it was impossible that rumour should

sleep upon—an heiress—and a beauty), that she intended in future to reside. Even Warlock (that spell to the proud heart of her uncle) she ceased to retain; it was offered to the nearest relation of the family, at a sum which he did not hesitate to close with, and by the common vicissitudes of fortune—the estate of the ancient Brandons has now, we perceive by a weekly Journal, just passed into the hands of a wealthy alderman.

It was nearly a year since Brandon's death, when a letter, bearing the foreign post-mark, came to Lucy; from that time her spirits, which before (though subject to fits of abstraction) had been even and subdued, not sad, rose into all the cheerfulness and vivacity of her earliest youth: she busied herself actively in preparations for her departure from the country; and at length the day was fixed, and the vessel was engaged. Every day till that one did Lucy walk to the seaside, and, ascending the highest cliff, spend hours, till the evening closed, in watching, with seemingly idle gaze, the vessels that interspersed the sea; and with every day her health seemed to strengthen, and the soft and lucid colour she had once worn, to rebloom in her cheek.

Previous to her departure, Miss Brandon dismissed her servants, and only engaged one female (a foreigner) to accompany her. A certain tone of quiet command, formerly unknown to her, characterized these measures, so daringly independent for one of her sex and age. The day arrived; it was the anniversary of her last interview with Clifford. On entering the vessel it was observed that she trembled violently, and that her face was as pale as death; a stranger, who had stood aloof, wrapped in his cloak, darted forward to assist her;—that was the last which her discarded and weeping servants beheld of her, from the pier where they stood to gaze.

Nothing more in this country was ever known of the fate of Lucy Brandon, except that to the distant relation who had purchased Warlock an order for the sum he had paid was enclosed, and signed by her; no farther tidings, by letter or by report, transpired;—and as the circle of her acquaintance was narrow, and interest in her fate existed vividly in none, save a few humble breasts, conjecture was never keenly awakened, and soon cooled into forgetfulness. If it favoured, after the lapse of years, any one notion more than another, it was,

that she had perished among the victims of the French revolution.

Meanwhile, let us glance over the destinies of our more subordinate acquaintances.

Augustus Tomlinson, on parting from Long Ned, had succeeded in reaching Calais, and after a rapid tour through the Continent, he ultimately betook himself to a certain literary city in Germany, where he became distinguished for his metaphysical acumen, and opened a school of morals on the Grecian model, taught in the French tongue. He managed, by the patronage he received, and the pupils he enlightened, to obtain a very decent income, and as he wrote a folio against Locke, and proved men had innate *feelings*, and affirmed that we should refer every thing not to reason, but to the sentiments of the soul, he became greatly respected for his extraordinary virtue. Some little discoveries were made after his death, which would perhaps have somewhat diminished the general odour of his sanctity, had not the admirers of his school carefully hushed up the matter, probably out of respect for "the sentiments of the soul."

Pepper, whom the police did not so anxiously desire to destroy as they did his two companions, might have managed, perhaps, many years longer to graze upon the public commons, had not a letter, written somewhat imprudently, fallen into wrong hands. This, though after creating a little noise it apparently died away, lived in the memory of the police, and finally conspired, with various peccadilloes, to produce his downfall. He was seized, tried, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. He so advantageously employed his time at Botany Bay, and arranged things there so comfortably to himself, that at the expiration of his sentence he refused to return home. He made an excellent match, built himself an excellent house, and remained in "the land of the blest," to the end of his days—noted to the last for the redundancy of his hair, and a certain ferocious coxcombrity of aspect.

As for Fighting Attie and Gentleman George, for Scarlet Jem and for Old Bags, we confess ourselves destitute of any certain information of their latter ends; we can only add with regard to Fighting Attie, "good luck be with him wherever he goes!" And for mine host of the Jolly Angler, that though we have not the physical constitution to quaff a "bumper of blue ruin,"

we shall be very happy over any tolerable wine, and in company with any agreeable convivialists, to bear our part in the polished chorus of "Here's to Gentleman George; God bless him!"

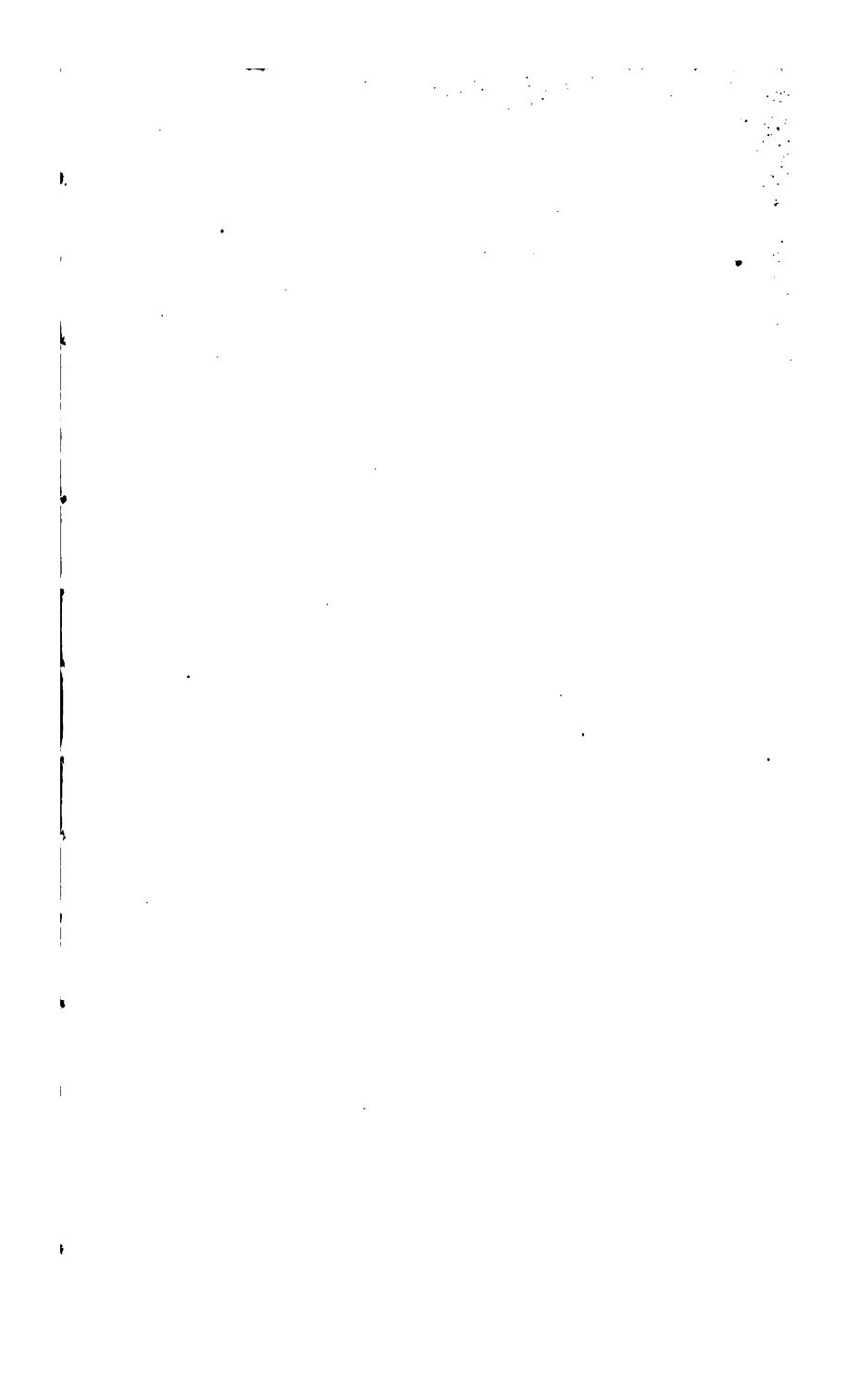
Mrs. Lobkins departed this life like a lamb; and Dummie Dunnaker obtained a license to carry on the business at Thames Court. He boasted, to the last, of his acquaintance with the great Captain Lovett, and of the affability with which that distinguished personage treated him. Stories he had, too, about Judge Brandon: but no one believed a syllable of them; and Dummie, indignant at the disbelief, increased out of vehemence the marvel of the stories; so that at length what was added, swallowed up what was original, and Dummie himself might have been puzzled to satisfy his own conscience as to what was false and what was true.

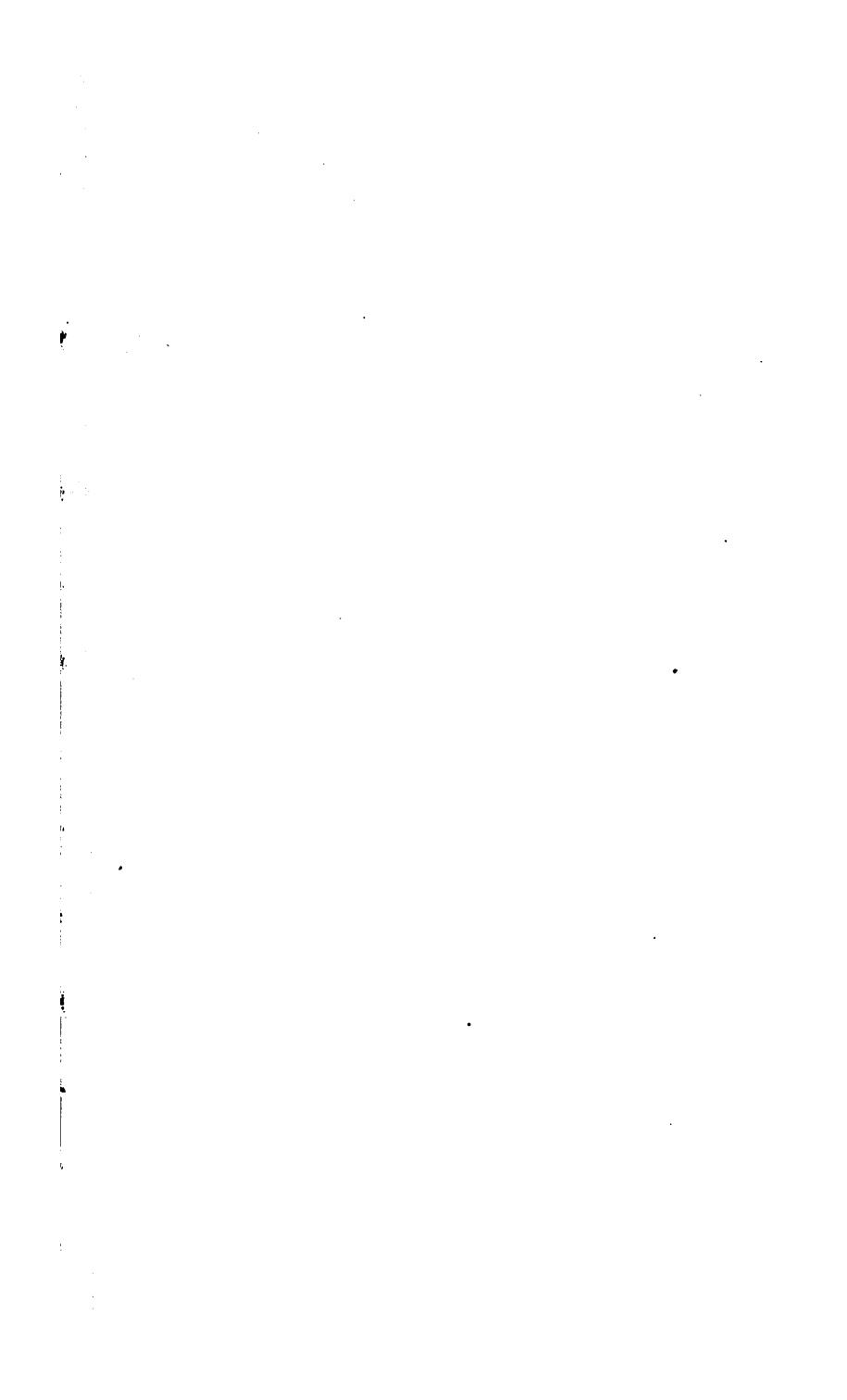
The erudite Peter MacGrawler returning to Scotland, disappeared by the road; a person singularly resembling the sage was afterward seen at Carlisle, where he discharged the useful and praiseworthy duties of Jack Ketch. But whether or not this respectable functionary *was* our identical Simon Pure, our ex-editor of the *Asinæum*, we will not take it upon ourselves to assert. For ourself, we imagined lately that we discovered his fine Roman hand (though a little palsied by age) in an excellent article in *Blackwood's Magazine*, written to panegyrize that charming romance in every one's hands, called "The five Knights of St. Alban's."

Lord Mauleverer, finally resolving on a single life, passed the remainder of his years in indolent tranquillity. When he died, the newspapers asserted that His Majesty was deeply affected by the loss of so old and valued a friend. His furniture and wines sold remarkably high; and a great man, his particular intimate, who purchased his books, startled to find by pencil marks that the noble deceased had read some of them, exclaimed, not without truth, "Ah, Mauleverer might have been a deused clever fellow—if he had liked it." The Earl was accustomed to show as a curiosity a ring of great value, which he had received in a singular manner: one morning a packet was brought him, which he found to contain a sum of money, the ring mentioned, and a letter from the notorious Lovett, in which that person, in begging to return his Lordship the sums of which he had twice assisted to rob him, thanked him, with respectful warmth, for the con-

Such was the after fate of Clifford and Lucy. Who will condemn us for preferring the moral of that fate, to the moral which is extorted from the gibbet and the hulks; which makes scarecrows, not beacons; terrifies our weakness, not warns our reason? Who does not allow that it is better to repair than to perish; better, too, to atone as the citizen, than to repent as the hermit? Oh, John Wilkes! Alderman of London, and Drawcansir of Liberty, your life was not an iota too perfect,—your patriotism might have been infinitely purer,—your morals would have admitted indefinite amendment; you are no great favourite with us, or with the rest of the world; but you said one excellent thing, for which we look on you with benevolence, nay, almost with respect. We scarcely know whether to smile at its wit, or sigh at its wisdom. Mark this truth, all ye gentlemen of England, who would make laws as the Romans made *fusces*,—a bundle of rods with an axe in the middle; mark it! and remember! Long may it live, allied with hope in ourselves, but with gratitude in our children;—long after the book which it now “adorns” and “points” has gone to its dusty slumber;—long—long after the feverish hand which now writes it down can defend or enforce it no more!—“THE VERY WORST USE TO WHICH YOU CAN PUT A MAN IS TO HANG HIM!”

THE END.





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